

The Season after Pentecost

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

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Holy Trinity Sunday

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version™

Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was undeveloped and empty. Darkness covered the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

³God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” There was evening and there was morning—the first day.

⁶God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters, and let it separate the water from the water.” ⁷God made the expanse, and he separated the water that was below the expanse from the water that was above the expanse, and it was so. ⁸God called the expanse “sky.” There was evening and there was morning—the second day.

⁹God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear,” and it was so. The waters under the sky gathered to their own places, and the dry land appeared. ¹⁰God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathering places of the waters he called “seas.” God saw that it was good. ¹¹God said, “Let the earth produce plants—vegetation that produces seed, and trees that bear fruit with its seed in it—each according to its own kind on the earth,” and it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth plants, vegetation that produces seed according to its own kind, and trees that bear fruit with its seed in it, each according to its own kind, and God saw that it was good. ¹³There was evening and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to divide the day from the night, and let them serve as markers to indicate seasons, days, and years. ¹⁵Let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light to the earth,” and it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set these lights in place in the expanse of the sky to provide light for the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. ¹⁹There was evening and there was morning—the fourth day.

²⁰God said, “Let the waters swarm with living creatures, and let birds and other winged creatures fly above the earth in the open expanse of the sky.” ²¹God created the large sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their own kind, and every winged bird according to its own kind. God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them when he said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the waters of the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³There was evening and there was morning—the fifth day.

²⁴God said, “Let the earth produce living creatures according to their own kind, livestock, creeping things, and wild animals according to their own kind,” and it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals according to their own kind, and the livestock according to their own kind, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its own kind. God saw that it was good.

²⁶God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that crawls on the earth.”

²⁷God created the man in his own image.

In the image of God he created him.

Male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹God said, “Look, I have given you every plant that produces seed on the face of the whole earth, and every tree that bears fruit that produces seed. It will be your food. ³⁰To every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the sky, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning—the sixth day.

^{2:1}The heavens and the earth were finished, along with everything in them. ²On the seventh day God had finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had been doing. ³God blessed the seventh day and set it apart as holy, because on it he rested from all his work of creation that he had done.

⁴This is the account about the development of the heavens and the earth when they were created...

Epistle / Second Reading

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

¹⁴Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and spoke loudly and clearly to them:

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words! Jesus the Nazarene was a man recommended to you by God with miracles, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know.

²³This man, who was handed over by God’s set plan and foreknowledge, you killed by having lawless men nail him to a cross. ²⁴He is the one God raised up by freeing him from the agony of death, because death was not able to hold him in its grip.

²⁵“Indeed, David says concerning him:

I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

²⁶Therefore my heart was glad,

and my tongue rejoiced.

My flesh also will rest in hope,

²⁷because you will not abandon my life to the grave,

nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

²⁸You have made known to me the paths of life.

You will fill me with joy in your presence.

²⁹“Gentlemen, brothers, I can speak confidently to you about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Since he was a prophet and knew that

God had sworn to him with an oath that he would seat one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹he saw what was coming and spoke about the resurrection of Christ, saying that he was neither abandoned to the grave nor did his flesh see decay.

³²“This Jesus is the one God has raised up. We are all witnesses of that. ³³So, after he was exalted to the right hand of God and after he received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he poured out what you are now seeing and hearing.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into heaven, and yet he says:

The Lord said to my Lord,
‘Sit at my right hand,
³⁵until I make your enemies
a footstool under your feet.’

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Holy Gospel

Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some hesitated because they were uncertain. ¹⁸Jesus approached and spoke to them saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and gather disciples from all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and by teaching them to keep all the instructions I have given you. And surely I am with you always until the end of the age.”

Proper 3

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 49:8-16a

⁸This is what the LORD says.

In the time of favor, I will answer you.

In the day of salvation, I will help you.

I will guard you,

and I will appoint you to be a covenant for the people,
to re-establish the land,

to redistribute inheritances that are now deserted,

⁹to say to the prisoners, "Go forth!"

to those who are in the darkness, "Show yourselves!"

They will graze beside roads,

and they will find pasture on all the barren heights.

¹⁰They will not hunger, and they will not thirst,

and neither scorching wind nor sun will strike them,

because the one who shows them mercy will lead them.

He will guide them beside springs of water.

¹¹I will make all my mountains into a smooth road,

and my highways will be raised up.

¹²Look, people will come from far away.

Look, some will come from the north and the west,

and some from the land of Sinim.

¹³Shout for joy, O heavens,

and rejoice, O earth.

Let mountains burst forth with shouts of joy,

because the LORD is comforting his people,

and he is showing mercy to his afflicted ones.

¹⁴But Zion said, "The LORD has abandoned me.

The Lord has forgotten me."

¹⁵Can a woman forget her nursing child

and not show mercy to the son from her womb?

Even if these women could forget,

I will never forget you.

¹⁶Look, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 1:8–17

⁸First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ concerning all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹To be sure, God, whom I serve with my spirit by proclaiming the gospel of his Son, is my witness to how constantly I make mention of you. In all my prayers, ¹⁰I always ask if perhaps at last a way might be opened, if God wills, for me to come to you. ¹¹I certainly long to see you, in order that I may deliver some spiritual gift to you, so that you are strengthened—¹²that is, when I am with you, that we will be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, yours and also mine.

¹³I do not want you to be unaware of the fact, brothers, that I have often planned to come to you but have been prevented from doing so until now. I wanted to have some fruit among you in the same way as I did among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴I have an obligation both to Greeks and non-Greeks, to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵That is why I am eager to proclaim the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes—to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed by faith, for faith, just as it is written, “The righteous will live by faith.”

Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:24–34

²⁴“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and *mammon*.^a

²⁵“For this reason I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

²⁷“Which of you can add a single moment to his lifespan by worrying? ²⁸Why do you worry about clothing? Consider how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin, ²⁹but I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will he not clothe you even more, you of little faith?

³¹“So do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³²For the unbelievers chase after all these things. Certainly your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

^a 24 *Mammon* is an Aramaic term for worldly wealth and property.

Proper 4

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Deuteronomy 11:18–21, 26–28

¹⁸Put these words of mine in your hearts and in your soul, and tie them on your wrists as signs and as symbols on your forehead. ¹⁹Teach them to your children by talking about them when you sit in your house and when you travel on the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹so that your days and the days of your children may be many on the land that the LORD promises to your fathers with an oath, as many as the days that the heavens remain over the earth.

²⁶You see, I am placing before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God that I am giving you today, ²⁸or the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God and you turn away from the path that I am commanding you today by walking after other gods whom you did not know.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 3:21–28

²¹But now, completely apart from the law, a righteousness from God has been made known. The Law and the Prophets testify to it. ²²This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all and over all who believe.

In fact, there is no difference, ²³because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God publicly displayed as the atonement seat through faith in his blood. God did this to demonstrate his justice, since, in his divine restraint, he had left the sins that were committed earlier unpunished. ²⁶He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he would be both just and the one who justifies the person who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷What happens to boasting then? It has been eliminated. By what principle—by the principle of works? No, but by the principle of faith. ²⁸For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 7:15–29

¹⁵“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. You do not gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, do you? ¹⁷So then, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰So then, by their fruit you will recognize them. ²¹Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom

of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and drive out demons in your name and perform many miracles in your name?’ ²³Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.’

²⁴“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on bedrock. ²⁵The rain came down, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house. But it did not fall, because it was founded on bedrock. ²⁶Everyone who hears these words of mine but does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain came down, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—it was completely destroyed.”

²⁸When Jesus finished speaking these words, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹because he taught them as one who had authority, and not like their experts in the law.

Proper 5

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Hosea 5:15-6:6

¹⁵I will go. I will return to my place
until they admit their guilt and seek my face.

In their distress they will earnestly seek me.

^{6:1}Come, let us return to the LORD.

For he has torn us to pieces,

but he will heal us.

He has struck us,

but he will bandage our wounds.

²After two days he will revive us.

On the third day he will raise us up,

so that we may live in his presence.

³Let us acknowledge the LORD.

Let us pursue knowledge of the LORD.

As surely as the sun rises,

the LORD will appear.

He will come to us like a heavy rain,

like the spring rain that waters the earth.

⁴What am I going to do with you, Ephraim?

What am I going to do with you, Judah?

For your faithfulness is like a morning mist,

like early dew that disappears.

⁵That is why I cut them to pieces by means of the prophets.

I killed them with the words of my mouth.

The judgments against you go forth like the light.

⁶For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,

and the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 4:13–25

¹³Indeed, the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not given to Abraham or his descendants through the law, but through the righteousness that is by faith. ¹⁴To be sure, if people are heirs by the law, faith is empty and the promise is nullified. ¹⁵For law brings wrath. (Where there is no law, there is no transgression.) ¹⁶For this reason, the promise is by faith, so that it may be according to grace and may be guaranteed to all of Abraham's descendants—not only to the one

who is a descendant by law, but also to the one who has the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.”

In the presence of God, Abraham believed him who makes the dead alive and calls non-existing things so that they exist. ¹⁸Hoping beyond what he could expect, he believed that he would become the father of many nations, just as he was told: “This is how many your descendants will be.” ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith, even though he considered his own body as good as dead (because he was about one hundred years old), and even though he considered Sarah’s womb to be dead. ²⁰He did not waver in unbelief with respect to God’s promise, but he grew strong in faith, giving glory to God ²¹and being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”

²³Now the statement “it was credited to him” was not written for him alone, ²⁴but also for us to whom it would be credited, namely, to us who believe in the one who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. ²⁵He was handed over to death because of our trespasses and was raised to life because of our justification.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 9:9–13

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting in the tax collector’s booth. He said to him, “Follow me.” Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰As Jesus was reclining at the table in Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were actually there too, eating with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹²When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “The healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. ¹³Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ In fact, I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Proper 6

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Exodus 19:2–8

²After they set out from Rephidim and came to the Wilderness of Sinai, they camped in the wilderness. Israel camped there in front of the mountain.

³Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, “This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and to tell the people of Israel: ⁴‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now if you will carefully listen to my voice and keep my covenant, then you will be my special treasure out of all the nations, although the entire earth is mine. ⁶You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation.’ These are the words that you are to speak to the Israelites.”

⁷Moses went and summoned the elders of the people, and he set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ⁸All the people answered together, “Everything that the LORD has said, we will do.”

Moses brought back the people’s words to the LORD.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 5:6-15

⁶For at the appointed time, while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷It is rare indeed that someone will die for a righteous person. Perhaps someone might actually go so far as to die for a person who has been good to him. ⁸But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹Therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, it is even more certain that we will be saved from God’s wrath through him. ¹⁰For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, it is even more certain that, since we have been reconciled, we will be saved by his life. ¹¹And not only is this so, but we also go on rejoicing confidently in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received this reconciliation.

¹²So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned. ¹³For even before the law was given, sin was in the world. Now, sin is not charged to one’s account if there is no law, ¹⁴and yet death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those whose sin was not like the transgression of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵But the gracious gift is not like Adam’s trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of this one man, it is even more certain that God’s grace, and the gift given by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, overflowed to the many!

Holy Gospel

Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-20)

³⁵Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness.

³⁶When he saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were troubled and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸Therefore pray that the Lord of the harvest will send out workers into his harvest.”

^{10:1}Jesus called his twelve disciples to himself and gave them authority to drive out unclean spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵Jesus sent these twelve out and commanded them, “Do not go among the Gentiles, and do not enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, preach this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven is near!’ ⁸Heal the sick. Raise the dead. Cleanse lepers. Drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

⁹“Do not take gold, silver, or bronze in your money belts. ¹⁰Do not take a bag for the journey, or two coats, sandals, or a staff, because the worker deserves his support. ¹¹Whenever you enter a town or village, find out who is worthy and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the household, give it your greeting. ¹³If the household is worthy, let your peace rest on it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone does not receive you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet as you leave that house or that town. ¹⁵Amen^a I tell you: It will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶“Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷Be on guard against people. They will hand you over to councils, and they will whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸You will be brought into the presence of governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹Whenever they hand you over, do not be worried about how you will respond or what you will say, because what you say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰In fact you will not be the ones speaking, but the Spirit of your Father will be speaking through you.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Proper 7

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Jeremiah 20:7-13

⁷You persuaded me, LORD, and I agreed to it.
You are stronger than I am, and you won out.
I have become a laughingstock all day long,
and everyone is mocking me.

⁸Whenever I speak, I cry out.
I cry out, “Violence and destruction!”
But the word of the LORD has brought scorn on me.
I am mocked all day long.

⁹If I say, “I will not mention him
or speak in his name anymore,”
then there is a burning fire in my heart,
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary of holding it in.
I cannot!

¹⁰I hear many whispering,
“Terror on every side!”
All my close friends,
those who are watching for my fall, say,
“Denounce him! Let’s denounce him.
Perhaps he can be pressured into making a mistake.
Then we will have the upper hand against him,
and we will take our revenge on him.”

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a terrifying warrior.
So my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not gain the upper hand.
They will be put to shame completely,
because they have not been successful.
Their eternal disgrace will never be forgotten.

¹²LORD of Armies, you test the righteous.
You see the heart and the mind.
Let me see your vengeance on them,
for I have laid out my case before you.

¹³Sing to the LORD!
Praise the LORD,
for he has delivered the life of the needy

from the hand of the wicked.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 6:12–23

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires. ¹³Do not offer the members of your body to sin as tools of unrighteousness. Instead, offer yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and offer the members of your body to God as tools of righteousness. ¹⁴Indeed, sin will not continue to control you, because you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵What then? Should we continue to sin, because we are not under law but under grace? Absolutely not! ¹⁶Do you not know that when you offer yourselves to obey someone as slaves, you are slaves of the one you are obeying—whether slaves of sin, resulting in death, or slaves of obedience, resulting in righteousness?

¹⁷Thanks be to God that, although you used to be slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to the pattern of the teaching into which you were placed. ¹⁸After you were set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹(I am speaking in a human way because of the weakness of your flesh.) Indeed, just as you offered your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness, resulting in more lawlessness, so now offer your members in the same way as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

²⁰For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. ²¹So what kind of fruit did you have then? They were things of which you are now ashamed. Yes, the final result of those things is death. ²²But now, since you were set free from sin and have become slaves to God, you have your fruit resulting in sanctification—and the final result is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the undeserved gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 10:5a, 21–33

⁵Jesus sent these twelve out and commanded them,

²¹“Brother will hand over his brother to death, and a father will do the same with his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ²²You will be hated by all people because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved. ²³And when they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. Amen^a I tell you: You will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor is a servant above his master. ²⁵It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher and the servant like his master. If the master of the house was called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶“So do not be afraid of them, because there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; and

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what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

²⁹“Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without the knowledge and consent of your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹So do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows.

³²“Everyone who confesses me before others, I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven. ³³But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.”

Proper 8

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Jeremiah 28:5-9

⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the House of the LORD. ⁶He said, “Amen! May the LORD do that! May the LORD fulfill the words you have prophesied and bring back the vessels of the LORD’s house, and may he bring all the exiles back from Babylon to this place. ⁷Nevertheless, listen now to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸The prophets from ancient times, who came before you and me, prophesied war, famine, and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹As for the prophet who prophesies peace, only when the word of the prophet actually comes true will that prophet become known as someone whom the LORD has truly sent.”

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 7:1–13

Or don’t you know, brothers (since I am speaking to those who know the law), that a law has jurisdiction over a person only as long as he lives? ²For example, a married woman is bound to her husband by law as long as he is alive, but if he dies, she is released from this law regarding her husband. ³So then, she will be labeled an adulteress if she is joined to another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from this law, and she is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

⁴In the same way, my brothers, you also were put to death in regard to the law by the body of Christ, so that you may be joined to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, in order that we might produce fruit for God. ⁵For when we were in the flesh, strong sinful desires stirred up by the law were at work in our members, with the result that we produced fruit that results in death. ⁶But now we have been released from the law by dying to what held us in its grip, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the letter of the law.

⁷What will we say then? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! On the contrary, I would not have recognized sin except through the law. For example, I would not have known about coveting if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸But sin, seizing the opportunity provided by this commandment, produced every kind of sinful desire in me.

For apart from the law, sin is dead. ⁹Once I was alive without the law. But when this commandment came, sin came to life, ¹⁰and I died. This commandment that was intended to result in life actually resulted in death for me. ¹¹You see, sin, seizing the opportunity provided by this commandment, deceived me and put me to death through it.

¹²So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good. ¹³Then did what is good become death to me? Absolutely not! But sin, so that it might be recognized as sin, brings about my death by this good thing, so that through this commandment sin might prove itself to be totally sinful.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 10:34–42

³⁴“Do not think that I came to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I came to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶A man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.

³⁷“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward. Whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. ⁴²Whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink because he is my disciple—Amen^a I tell you—he will never lose his reward.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Proper 9

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Old Testament / First Reading

Zechariah 9:9-12

⁹Rejoice greatly, Daughter of Zion!
Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!
Look! Your King is coming to you.
He is righteous and brings salvation.
He is humble and is riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the horse from Jerusalem.
The battle bow will be taken away,
and he will proclaim peace to the nations.
His kingdom will extend from sea to sea,
from the River to the ends of the earth.
¹¹As for you,
because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.
¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners who have hope.
This very day I declare that I will restore double to you.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 7:14–25a

¹⁴Certainly we know that the law is spiritual, but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not keep doing what I want. Instead, I do what I hate. ¹⁶And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷But now it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸Indeed, I know that good does not live in me, that is, in my sinful flesh. The desire to do good is present with me, but I am not able to carry it out. ¹⁹So I fail to do the good I want to do. Instead, the evil I do not want to do, that is what I keep doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is sin living in me.

²¹So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is present with me. ²²I certainly delight in God's law according to my inner self, ²³but I see a different law at work in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me captive to the law of sin, which is present in my members. ²⁴What a miserable wretch I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:25–30

²⁵At that time, Jesus continued, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from clever and learned people and have revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, because this was pleasing to you. ²⁷Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Proper 10

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 55:10-13

¹⁰Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky
and do not return there
unless they first water the earth, make it give birth, and cause it to sprout,
so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹in the same way my word that goes out from my mouth
will not return to me empty.
Rather, it will accomplish whatever I please,
and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it.
¹²Yes, you will go out with joy,
and in peace you will be carried along.
The mountains and the hills will break out in shouts of joy before you,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.
¹³Instead of thorns, a fir tree will grow up.
Instead of briars, a myrtle tree will grow up.
This will make a name for the LORD.
It will serve as an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 8:12–17

¹²So then, brothers, we do not owe it to the sinful flesh to live in harmony with it. ¹³For if you live in harmony with the sinful flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the actions of the body, you will live.

¹⁴Indeed, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you are afraid again, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we call out, “*Abba, Father!*” ¹⁶The Spirit himself joins our spirit in testifying that we are God’s children.

¹⁷Now if we are children, we are also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, since we suffer with him, so that we may also be glorified with him.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:1–9, 18-23

That same day Jesus left the house and was sitting by the sea. ²A large crowd gathered around him. So he stepped into a boat and sat down, while all the people stood on the shore. ³He told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen, a sower went out to sow. ⁴As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have

much soil. Immediately the seed sprang up, because the soil was not deep. ⁶But when the sun rose, the seed was scorched. Because it had no root, it withered away. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew up and choked it. ⁸But some seed fell on good ground and produced grain: some one hundred times, some sixty, and some thirty times more than was sown. ⁹Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.

¹⁸“So listen carefully to the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the Evil One comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the seed that was sown along the path. ²⁰The seed that was sown on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹yet he is not deeply rooted and does not endure. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. ²²The seed that was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the word, but the worry of this world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it produces no fruit. ²³But the seed that was sown on the good ground is the one who continues to hear and understand the word. Indeed he continues to produce fruit: some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times more than was sown.”

Proper 11

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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 44:6-8

⁶This is what the LORD, the King of Israel,
Israel's Redeemer, the LORD of Armies, says.

I am the first, and I am the last.

Except for me, there is no god.

⁷For who is like me? Let him declare it.

Let him recite in order for me the things that took place
since the time I established an ancient people.

Or let them declare what is yet to come,
and what is going to take place.

⁸Do not tremble, and do not be frightened.

Did I not announce this to you,
and declare it already long ago?

You are my witnesses.

Is there any god except me?

There is no other Rock. I am not aware of any other.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 8:18–27

¹⁸For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰For creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope ²¹that even creation itself will be set free from slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

²²For we know that all of creation is groaning with birth pains right up to the present time. ²³And not only creation, but also we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we eagerly await our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴Indeed, it was for this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for something we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patient endurance.

²⁶In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we should pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that are not expressed in words. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints, according to God's will.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

²⁴He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶When the plants sprouted and produced heads of grain, the weeds also appeared. ²⁷The servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where did the weeds come from?’ ²⁸He said to them, ‘An enemy did this.’ The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and gather up the weeds?’ ²⁹‘No,’ he answered, ‘because when you gather up the weeds, you might pull up the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, “First, gather up the weeds, bind them in bundles, and burn them. Then, gather the wheat into my barn.”’”

³⁶Then Jesus sent the people away and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

³⁷He answered them, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world. The good seeds are the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the Evil One. ³⁹The enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the world. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will pull out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and those who continue to break the law. ⁴²The angels will throw them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Proper 12

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Old Testament / First Reading

Deuteronomy 7:6–9

⁶For you are a people that is holy to the LORD your God, because the LORD your God has chosen you to belong to him as a people that is his treasured possession, chosen from all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. ⁷The LORD became attached to you by love and has chosen you, not because you were more numerous than all the peoples. Actually you were the fewest of all the peoples. ⁸But because of the LORD's love for you and because he was keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that is why the LORD brought you out by a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

⁹He did this so that you would know that the LORD your God, yes, he is God, the faithful God who maintains both his covenant and his mercy for those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 8:28–39

²⁸We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose, ²⁹because those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. And those he justified, he also glorified.

³¹What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

³³Who will bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies! ³⁴Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, was raised to life, is the one who is at God's right hand and who is also interceding for us! ³⁵What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶Just as it is written:

For your sake we are being put to death all day long.

We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:44–52

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid again. In his joy, he goes away and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls. ⁴⁶When he found one very valuable pearl, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. ⁴⁸When the net was filled, they pulled it onto the shore. They sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but threw the bad ones away. ⁴⁹That is how it will be at the end of the world. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous who are among them. ⁵⁰And they will throw the wicked into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ⁵¹Jesus said to them, “Did you understand all these things?”

They answered him, “Yes.”

⁵²He said to them, “Therefore every expert in the law who has been trained as a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure both new things and old things.”

Proper 13

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 55:1-5

Hey, all of you who are thirsty, come to the water,
even if you have no money!

Come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

²Why do you spend money on something that is not bread?

Why do you waste your labor on something that does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good.

Satisfy your appetite with rich food.

³Turn your ear toward me, and come to me.

Listen, so that you may continue to live.

Yes, I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
the faithful mercies promised to David.

⁴Look, I appointed him as a witness for peoples,
a leader and commander of peoples.

⁵Look, you will call out to a nation you do not know,
and a nation that does not know you will run to you,
on account of the LORD your God,
because of the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 9:1-5 (6-13)

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying—my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit ²that I have great sorrow and continuous pain in my heart. ³For I almost wish that I myself could be cursed and separated from Christ in place of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh, ⁴those who are Israelites. Theirs are the adoption as sons, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, came the Christ, who is God over all, eternally blessed. Amen.

⁶This does not mean that God’s word has failed, because not all who are descended from Israel are really Israel, ⁷and not all who are descended from Abraham are really his children. On the contrary, “Your line of descent will be traced through Isaac.” ⁸This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are counted as his descendants. ⁹For this is what the promise said: “I will arrive at this set time, and Sarah will have a son.”

¹⁰Not only that, but Rebekah also had children by one man, our forefather, Isaac. ¹¹Even before the twins were born or did anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose in election might continue— ¹²not by works but because of him who calls us—it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger.” ¹³Just as it is written: “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

Holy Gospel

Matthew 14:13–21

¹³When Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place to be alone. When the crowds heard this, they followed him on foot from the towns.

¹⁴When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw a large crowd. He had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵When evening came, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place and the hour is already late. Send the crowds away, so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶But Jesus said to them, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

¹⁷They told him, “We have here only five loaves and two fish.”

¹⁸“Bring them here to me,” he replied. ¹⁹Then he instructed the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish. After looking up to heaven, he blessed them. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples. The disciples gave the food to the people. ²⁰They all ate and were filled. They picked up twelve basketfuls of what was left over from the broken pieces. ²¹Those who ate were about five thousand men, not even counting women and children.

Proper 14

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Old Testament / First Reading

Job 38:4-18

⁴Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you understand anything about it.

⁵Who determined its dimensions?

I am sure you know.

Who stretched out the surveying line over it?

⁶What supports its foundation?

Who set its cornerstone in place,

⁷when the morning stars sang loud songs together,
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

⁸Who locked up the sea behind doors
when it burst out of the womb?

⁹When I clothed the sea with clouds,
when I wrapped it with thick darkness as its swaddling cloths,

¹⁰when I broke its power with my decree,
when I locked it up behind barred, double doors,

¹¹I said, "You may come this far, but no farther.

Here is the barrier for your proud waves."

¹²Have you ever in all your days given a command to the morning?

Have you ever set a time for the sun to rise,

¹³so it may grab the earth by its edges
and shake the wicked out of it?

¹⁴The earth's shapes become visible like designs impressed on clay,
and its decorations can be seen like those on a garment.

¹⁵Their light is withheld from the wicked,
and an uplifted arm is broken.

¹⁶Have you ever traveled to the sources of the sea
or walked around in the dark depths of the ocean?

¹⁷Have the gates of death been revealed to you?
Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?

¹⁸Do you comprehend the vast expanses of the earth?
Tell me, if you know all this.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 10:5–17

⁵Indeed, Moses writes this about the righteousness that comes by the law: “The one who does these things will live by them.” ⁶But the righteousness that comes by faith speaks like this: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷“or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith that we are proclaiming. ⁹Certainly, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and it is with the mouth that a person confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹For Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

¹²So there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord is Lord of all, who gives generously to all who call on him. ¹³Yes, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴So then, how can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one about whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵And how can they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news of peace, who preach the gospel of good things!”

¹⁶But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who believed our message?” ¹⁷So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through the word of Christ.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 14:22–33

²²Immediately Jesus urged the disciples to get into the boat and to go ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed the crowd, he went up onto the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. ²⁴By then the boat was quite a distance from shore, being pounded by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came toward them, walking on the sea. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and cried out in fear, “It’s a ghost!” ²⁷But Jesus spoke to them at once, saying, “Take heart! It is I! Do not be afraid.”

²⁸Peter answered him and said, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.”

²⁹Jesus said, “Come!”

Peter stepped down from the boat, walked on the water, and went toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw the strong wind, he was afraid. As he began to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”

³¹Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand, took hold of him, and said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³²When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³Those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God!”

Proper 15

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

This is what the LORD says.

Protect justice, and carry out righteousness,
because my salvation is coming very soon.

My righteousness is ready to be revealed.

⁶Then the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him and to love the name of the LORD
and to become his servants,

every one of them who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
those who take hold of my covenant—

⁷I will bring them to my holy mountain,
and I will make them glad in my house of prayer.

Their whole burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be
acceptable on my altar.

For my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples of the world.

⁸This is the declaration of God the LORD,
who gathers Israel's dispersed people:

"I will gather still more people to my house besides
the ones already gathered."

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 11:1–2, 13-15, 28-32

So I say, did God reject his people? Absolutely not! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham from the tribe of Benjamin. ²God did not reject his people whom he foreknew—or don't you know what Scripture says about Elijah, how he was pleading with God against Israel.

¹³I am speaking to you Gentiles. For as long as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I am going to speak highly of my ministry. ¹⁴Perhaps I may make my own people jealous, and so save some of them. ¹⁵For if their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, what does their acceptance mean other than the dead coming to life?

²⁸In regard to the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But, in regard to election, they are especially dear for the sake of the patriarchs, ²⁹because God's gracious gifts and call are not regretted. ³⁰For just as you were once disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy due to their disobedience, ³¹so also now they have become disobedient, so that by the mercy shown to you they may be shown mercy too. ³²For God imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may show mercy to all.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 15:21–28

²¹Jesus left that place and withdrew into the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²²There a Canaanite woman from that territory came and kept crying out, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! A demon is severely tormenting my daughter!”

²³But he did not answer her a word.

His disciples came and pleaded, “Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us.”

²⁴He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

²⁵But she came and knelt in front of him, saying, “Lord, help me.”

²⁶He answered her, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to their little dogs.”

²⁷“Yes, Lord,” she said, “yet their little dogs also eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”

²⁸Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, your faith is great! It will be done for you, just as you desire.” And her daughter was healed at that very hour.

Proper 16

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you people who pursue righteousness,
you people who seek the LORD!
Look confidently to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were cut.
²Look confidently to Abraham your father,
and to Sarah, who gave birth to you.
Yes, when I called him, Abraham was only one person,
but I blessed him and multiplied him.
³The LORD is certain to comfort Zion.
He will comfort all her ruins.
Certainly he will make her wilderness like Eden
and her wasteland like the garden of the LORD.
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the sound of music.
⁴Pay attention to me, O my people.
My nation, listen to me!
For the law will go out from me,
and I will establish my justice as a light to the peoples.
⁵My righteousness is near.
My salvation goes forth,
and my arms will bring justice to the peoples.
The seacoasts will wait for me.
They will have confidence in my arm.
⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens.
Look closely at the earth beneath,
because the heavens will vanish like smoke,
and the earth will wear out like a garment,
and its inhabitants will die like gnats.
But my salvation will remain forever,
and my righteousness will never be abolished.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 11:33–12:8

³³Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments

and how untraceable his ways!

³⁴“For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his adviser?”

³⁵“Or who has first given to God
that he will be repaid?”

³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

^{12:1}Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy and pleasing to God—which is your appropriate worship. ²Also, do not continue to conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you test and approve what is the will of God—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

³So by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought, but think in a way that results in sound judgment, as God distributed a measure of faith to each of you. ⁴For we have many members in one body, and not all the members have the same function. ⁵In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace God has given us. If the gift is prophecy, do it in complete agreement with the faith. ⁷If it is serving, then serve. If it is teaching, then teach. ⁸If it is encouraging, then encourage. If it is contributing, be generous. If it is leadership, be diligent. If it is showing mercy, do it cheerfully.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 16:13–20

¹³When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴They said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵He said to them, “But you, who do you say that I am?”

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overpower it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰Then he commanded the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Proper 17

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Jeremiah 15:15-21

¹⁵O LORD, you understand.

Remember me and care for me.

Take vengeance for me on those who persecute me.

You are slow to anger.

Do not take me away.

Keep in mind that for your sake I bear disgrace.

¹⁶Your words came to me, and I devoured them.

Your words became my joy,

the delight of my heart,

because I bear your name,

O LORD God of Armies.

¹⁷I did not sit with the band of partygoers,

nor did I celebrate with them.

I sat alone, because your hand was upon me.

You filled me with indignation.

¹⁸Why is my pain unending?

Why is my wound incurable, refusing to heal?

Will you be as deceptive as an intermittent stream to me,

like a source of water that a person can't depend on?

¹⁹Therefore this is what the LORD says.

If you repent, I will take you back,

so that you may stand before me.

If what you say is worthwhile and not worthless,

you will be my spokesman.

They must turn to you,

but you must not turn to them.

²⁰I will make you like a bronze wall to this people.

They will fight against you,

but they will not overcome you,

because I am with you to save you

and to rescue you, declares the LORD.

²¹I will rescue you from the hand of the wicked,

and I will deliver you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 12:9–21

⁹Do not just pretend to love others. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Think of others as deserving more honor than yourselves. ¹¹Do not be lagging behind in zeal, but be fervent in spirit, as you continue to serve the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope. Endure trials patiently. Persist in prayer. ¹³Share with the saints who are in need. Be quick to welcome strangers as guests.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who are rejoicing; weep with those who are weeping. ¹⁶Have the same respect for one another. Do not be arrogant, but associate with the humble. Do not think too highly of yourselves.

¹⁷Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Focus on those things that everyone considers noble. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, maintain peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰But:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him a drink.

For by doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.

²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 16:21–28

²¹From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he had to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and experts in the law, and be killed, and on the third day be raised again.

²²Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "May you receive mercy, Lord! This will never happen to you."

²³But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a snare to me because you are not thinking the things of God, but the things of men."

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵In fact whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶After all, what will it benefit a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul? Or what can a person give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father together with his angels, and then he will repay everyone according to his actions. ²⁸Amen^a I tell you: Some who are standing here will certainly not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Proper 18

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Ezekiel 33:7-9

⁷But I have appointed you, son of man, to be a watchman for the house of Israel. So whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you are to warn them from me. ⁸When I say to a wicked man, “Wicked man, you shall surely die,” if you do not speak to warn the wicked man against his way, that wicked man will die because of his guilt, but I will also hold you responsible for his blood. ⁹But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die because of his guilt, but you will have saved your life.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 13:1–10

Everyone must submit to the governing authorities. For no authority exists except by God, and the authorities that do exist have been established by God. ²Therefore the one who rebels against the authority is opposing God’s institution, and those who oppose will bring judgment on themselves.

³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to evil. Would you like to have no fear of the one in authority? Do what is good, and you will receive praise from him, ⁴because he is God’s servant for your benefit. But if you do wrong, be afraid, because he does not carry the sword without reason. He is God’s servant, a punisher to bring wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore it is necessary to submit, not only because of wrath, but also because of conscience.

⁶For this reason you also pay taxes, because the authorities are God’s ministers, who are employed to do this very thing. ⁷Pay what you owe to all of them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, and honor to whom honor is owed.

⁸Do not owe anyone anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments—do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet (and if there is any other commandment)—are summed up in this statement: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰Love does no harm to a neighbor, so love is the fulfillment of the law.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:1–20

At that time the disciples approached Jesus and asked, “Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ²Jesus called a little child, had him stand in the middle of them, ³and said, “Amen^a I tell

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

you: Unless you are turned and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵And whoever receives a little child like this one in my name receives me.

⁶“But, if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a huge millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ⁷Woe to the world because of temptations to sin. Temptations must come, but woe to that person through whom the temptation comes!

⁸“If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to be thrown into the eternal fire with two hands or two feet. ⁹If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to be thrown into hell fire with two eyes. ¹⁰See to it that you do not look down on one of these little ones, because I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹For the Son of Man came to save what was lost.

¹²“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go looking for the one that wandered away? ¹³If he finds it—Amen I tell you—he rejoices more over that one sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not wander away. ¹⁴In the same way, your Father in heaven does not want even one of these little ones to perish.

¹⁵“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his sin just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. ¹⁶But if he will not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And, if he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as an unbeliever or a tax collector. ¹⁸Amen I tell you: Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Amen I tell you again: If two of you on earth agree to ask for anything, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. ²⁰In fact where two or three have gathered together in my name, there I am among them.”

Proper 19

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 50:15–21

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and will pay us back in full for all of the evil that we did to him."

¹⁶They sent the following message to Joseph: "Before he died your father commanded us, ¹⁷'You are to tell Joseph, "Please forgive the offense of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" Now, please forgive the offense of the servants of the God of your father."

Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down in front of him, and they said, "See now, we are your servants."

¹⁹Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring this to pass and to keep many people alive, as it is this day. ²¹Now therefore do not be afraid. I will nourish you and your little ones." He comforted them and spoke to them in a kind way.

Epistle / Second Reading

Romans 14:1–12

Accept a person who is weak in faith, and do not pass judgment on things that are just a difference of opinion. ²One person believes it is right to eat anything. Another person who is weak eats only vegetables. ³The one who eats everything should not look down on the person who does not do so, and the one who does not eat everything should not judge the person who does, because God has accepted him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on someone else's servant? It is up to his master to decide whether that servant stands or falls. And he will stand, because God is able to make him stand.

⁵One person values one day above another. Another person values every day the same. Let each person be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The person who honors a certain day does this for the Lord, and the person who eats does this for the Lord, because he gives thanks to God. And the person who does not eat does this for the Lord and gives thanks to God.

⁷In fact, not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself. ⁸Indeed, if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹For this reason he died, rose, and lived, to be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰But you, why do you pass judgment on your brother? And you, why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹Indeed, it is written:

As I live, says the Lord,
every knee will bow to me,
and every tongue will acknowledge God.

¹²So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:21–35

²¹Then Peter came up and asked Jesus, “Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother when he sins against me? As many as seven times?”

²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but I tell you as many as seventy-seven times. ²³For this reason the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle them, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵Because the man was not able to pay the debt, his master ordered that he be sold, along with his wife, children, and all that he owned to repay the debt.

²⁶“Then the servant fell down on his knees in front of him, saying, ‘Master, be patient with me, and I will pay you everything!’ ²⁷The master of that servant had pity on him, released him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began choking him, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’

²⁹“So his fellow servant fell down and begged him, saying, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back!’ ³⁰But he refused. Instead he went off and threw the man into prison until he could pay back what he owed.

³¹“When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were very distressed. They went and reported to their master everything that had taken place.

³²“Then his master called him in and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt when you begged me to. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴His master was angry and handed him over to the jailers until he could pay back everything he owed.

³⁵“This is what my heavenly Father will also do to you unless each one of you forgives his brother from his heart.”

Proper 20

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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 55:6-9

⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found!
Call on him while he is near!
⁷Let the wicked man abandon his way.
Let an evil man abandon his thoughts.
Let him turn to the LORD,
and he will show him mercy.
Let him turn to our God,
because he will abundantly pardon.
⁸Certainly my plans are not your plans,
and your ways are not my ways, declares the LORD.
⁹Just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways,
and my plans are higher than your plans.

Epistle / Second Reading

Philippians 1:12–14, 19-30

¹²I want you to know, brothers, that the things which happened to me actually took place to advance the gospel. ¹³And so it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to all the rest, that I am in chains because of Christ. ¹⁴And, through my chains, the majority of the brothers in the Lord have become much more confident about daring to speak the word of God fearlessly.

¹⁹Because I know that this will turn out for my deliverance, through your prayer and the support of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰This matches my earnest expectation and hope that I will in no way be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, so even now, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹Yes, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²But if I am to go on living in the flesh, that will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet which should I prefer? I do not know. ²³I am pulled in two directions, because I have the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far. ²⁴But, it is more necessary for your sake that I remain in the flesh. ²⁵And since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and will continue with all of you, for your progress and joy in the faith. ²⁶And so by my coming to you again, my goal is to give you even more reason to boast in Christ Jesus.

²⁷Just conduct yourselves in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or am absent, I may hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, contending together with one soul for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸not frightened in any way by the adversaries. This is a sign for them of their destruction and of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹For it has been graciously granted to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,

³⁰having the same kind of struggle that you saw I was in, and that you now hear I am still experiencing.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 20:1–16

“Indeed the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing to pay the workers a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³He also went out about the third hour and saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace. ⁴To these he said, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did the same thing. ⁶When he went out about the eleventh hour, he found others standing unemployed. He said to them, ‘Why have you stood here all day unemployed?’

⁷“They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’

“He told them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When it was evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last group and ending with the first.’

⁹“When those who were hired around the eleventh hour came, they each received a denarius. ¹⁰When those who were hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But they each received a denarius too. ¹¹After they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner: ¹²‘Those who were last worked one hour, and you made them equal to us who have endured the burden of the day and the scorching heat!’

¹³“But he answered one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not make an agreement with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last one hired the same as I also gave to you. ¹⁵Can’t I do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶In the same way, the last will be first, and the first, last.”

Proper 21

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the LORD came to me.

²What do you mean, you who keep repeating this proverb concerning the soil of Israel, “Fathers eat sour grapes, and their sons’ teeth are set on edge”? ³As surely as I live, declares the LORD God, you will never again use this proverb in Israel. ⁴Indeed, all souls are mine. The soul of the father is mine just like the soul of the son. The soul who sins is the one who will die.

²⁵But you say, “The LORD’s way is not fair.” Listen now, house of Israel. Is it my way that is not fair? Is it not your ways that are not fair? ²⁶If a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and practices unrighteousness, he will die because of it. Because of the unrighteousness that he has practiced, he will die.

²⁷But if a wicked man turns from his wickedness that he has done and practices justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life. ²⁸Because he has seen and turned away from all the rebellious acts that he had committed, he will surely live, and he will not die. ²⁹But the house of Israel says, “The LORD’s way is not fair.” Is it really my ways that are not fair, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not fair?

³⁰Therefore, I will judge each one of you according to his ways, O house of Israel, declares the LORD God. Repent and turn away from all your rebellious acts, so that you will not set out a stumbling block that makes you guilty. ³¹Throw off from yourselves all your rebellious actions by which you have rebelled, and obtain a new heart and a new spirit for yourselves. Why should you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the LORD God. So repent and live!

Epistle / Second Reading

Philippians 2:1–4 (5-13) 14-18

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility consider one another better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look carefully not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. ⁶Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, ⁷but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²So then, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you, but also now much more in my absence, continue to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

¹³In fact, it is God who is working in you, both to will and to work, for the sake of his good pleasure.

¹⁴Do everything without complaining and arguing, ¹⁵so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God without blemish among a crooked and perverted generation. You shine among them like lights in the world, ¹⁶as you hold on to the word of life. Then I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. ¹⁷But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I continue to be glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸In the same way, also be glad and rejoice with me.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 21:23-27 (28–32)

²³When Jesus went into the temple courts, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him while he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things?” and “Who gave you this authority?”

²⁴Jesus answered them, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer it, I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵The baptism of John, where was it from? From heaven or from men?”

They discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘From men,’ we are afraid of the crowd, since they all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.”

He said to them, “Then I will not tell you by what authority I do these things.”

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰He came to the second and said the same thing. The second son answered, ‘I will go, sir,’ but he did not go.

³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?”

They said to him, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Amen^a I tell you: The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him. Even when you saw this, you did not change your mind and believe him.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Proper 22

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 5:1-7

Let me sing for my loved one a song about my loved one's vineyard.

My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile ridge.

²He dug it up and gathered the stones out of it.

He planted it with the best vines.

He built a tower in the middle of it.

He also cut a winepress into it.

He expected it to produce clusters of sweet grapes,
but it produced only sour grapes.

³So now, you residents of Jerusalem and you men of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more could have been done for my vineyard
that I have not already done for it?

When I expected it to produce clusters of sweet grapes,
why did it produce sour grapes?

⁵Now, let me tell you what I will do to my vineyard.

I will take away its hedge, and it will become a pasture.

I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled down.

⁶I will make it a wasteland.

It will not be pruned or hoed.

So briars and thorns will shoot up.

I will also command the clouds not to pour rain on it.

⁷Yes, the vineyard of the LORD of Armies is the house of Israel,
and the men of Judah are the planting that was pleasing to him.

He expected justice, but instead there was oppression.

He expected righteousness, but there was an outcry.

Epistle / Second Reading

Philippians 3:4b-14

If anyone else thinks that he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶in regard to zeal, persecuting the church; in regard to the righteousness that is in the law, blameless.

⁷But, whatever things were a profit for me, these things I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. ⁸But even more than that, I consider everything to be a loss because of what is worth far more: knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I have lost all things and consider them rubbish, so

that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, which comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God by faith. ¹⁰I do this so that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, ¹¹in the hope that in some way I may arrive at the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus also took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it yet, but there is one thing I do: Forgetting the things that are behind and straining toward the things that are ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 21:33–46

³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a tower. He leased it out to some tenant farmers and went away on a journey. ³⁴When the time approached to harvest the fruit, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. ³⁵The tenant farmers seized his servants. They beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶Then the landowner sent even more servants than the first time. The tenant farmers treated them the same way. ³⁷Finally, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. ³⁸But when the tenant farmers saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance!’ ³⁹They took him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰So when the landowner comes, what will he do to those tenant farmers?”

⁴¹They told him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end. Then he will lease out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him his fruit when it is due.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

⁴³“That is why I tell you the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces its fruit. ⁴⁴Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was talking about them. ⁴⁶Although they were looking for a way to arrest him, they were afraid of the crowds because the people regarded him as a prophet.

Proper 23

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 25:6-9

⁶On this mountain
the LORD of Armies will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food,
a banquet of aged wines,
with the best cuts of meat,
and with the finest wines.

⁷On this mountain
he will destroy the shroud that covers all peoples,
the burial cloth stretched over all nations.

⁸He has swallowed up death forever!
The LORD God will wipe away the tears from every face.
He will take away the shame of his people throughout the earth.
For the LORD has spoken.

⁹On that day it will be said,
“Look, here is our God!
We waited for him, and he saved us!
This is the LORD!
We waited for him.
Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation!”

Epistle / Second Reading

Philippians 4:4–13

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if anything is excellent, and if anything is praiseworthy, think about these things. ⁹The things that you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: Keep doing these things. And the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰I rejoice greatly in the Lord now that you have revived your concern for me once again. Actually, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹I am not saying this because I lack anything; in fact, I have learned to be content in any circumstances in which I find myself. ¹²I know what it is to live in humble circumstances, and I know what it is to have more than enough. I

have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, while being full or hungry, while having plenty or not enough. ¹³I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 22:1–14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables. He said, ²“The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent out his servants to summon those who were invited to the wedding banquet, but they did not want to come.

⁴“Then he sent out other servants and said, ‘Tell those who are invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and my fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet!’

⁵“But those who were invited paid no attention and went off, one to his own farm, another to his business. ⁶The rest seized the king’s servants, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷As a result, the king was very angry. He sent his army and killed those murderers and burned their town.

⁸“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹So go to the main crossroads and invite as many as you find to the wedding banquet.’ ¹⁰Those servants went out to the roads and gathered together everyone they found, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹²He said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wearing wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless. ¹³Then the king told the servants, ‘Tie him hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Proper 24

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 45:1-7

This is what the LORD says to his anointed one,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped,
to subdue nations before him
by stripping kings of their weapons,
to open doors before him
so that the gates cannot be shut.

²I myself will go before you,
and I will level high mountains.

I will break bronze doors into pieces,
and I will cut through iron bars.

³I will give you treasures hidden in darkness
and riches concealed in secret places,
so that you will acknowledge that I am the LORD,
the one who calls you by name, the God of Israel.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
for the sake of Israel my chosen one,
I will call you by your name.

I will give you an honored name, though you do not know me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Except for me, there is no god.

I will equip you even though you do not know me,

⁶so that people will know from the rising of the sun
to the place where it sets
that there is no one except me.

I am the LORD, and there is no other.

⁷I am the one who forms light and creates darkness,
the one who makes peace and creates disaster.

I am the LORD, the one who does all these things.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silas, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you as we make mention of you in our prayers, ³because we constantly remember before God our Father your work produced by faith, your labor produced by love, and your patient endurance produced by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴Dear brothers, loved by God, we know that God has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel did not come to you with mere words, but with power, with the Holy Spirit, and with deep conviction. You yourselves know very well what kind of people we proved to be for your sake, while we were with you. ⁶You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, when you welcomed the word during a time of great affliction with the joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became a model for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸Indeed, the word of the Lord has resounded from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith in God has become known. As a result, we do not need to say anything, ⁹because they themselves inform us about what kind of reception we received from you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God. ¹⁰They also report how you patiently wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, the one who is going to rescue us from the coming wrath.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 22:15–22

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went out and plotted together how to trap him in his words. ¹⁶They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are truthful and teach the way of God in accord with the truth. You are not concerned about gaining anyone’s approval because you are not swayed by appearances. ¹⁷So tell us, what do you think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸But Jesus knew their evil purpose and said, “Why are you testing me, hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.”

They brought him a denarius.

²⁰He asked them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

²¹“Caesar’s,” they replied to him.

Then he said to them, “Therefore give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

²²When they heard this, they were amazed. Then they left him and went away.

Proper 25

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Old Testament / First Reading

Leviticus 19:1–2, 15-18

The LORD told Moses ²to speak to the whole community of the Israelites and tell them these things:

You shall be holy, because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

¹⁵You shall not act unjustly in court cases. Do not show favoritism to a poor person, and do not show undue honor to an important person. You must judge your fellow citizens with justice.

¹⁶You shall not go around spreading slander among your people. You shall not testify falsely against your neighbor in a capital case. I am the LORD.

¹⁷You shall not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. You must openly rebuke your fellow citizen so that you do not become responsible for his sin. ¹⁸You must not take revenge. You must not bear a grudge against the members of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 2:1–13

Indeed, brothers, you yourselves know that our visit to you was not a waste of time. ²Even though we had suffered previously and were treated shamefully in Philippi (as you know), we were bold in our God to speak the gospel of God to you in the face of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not come from error or impure motives, or by way of deceit. ⁴Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please people but God, who examines our hearts. ⁵Indeed, as you know, we never at any time used flattering speech nor did we act with greed as a motive. God is our witness. ⁶Also, we did not seek the praise of people (neither yours nor anyone else's), ⁷even though we could have been a burden as Christ's apostles. On the contrary, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. ⁸We yearned for you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

⁹Surely, brothers, you remember our labor and hardship! We worked night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you, while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, of how devout, righteous, and blameless we were toward you who believe.

¹¹In the same way, you know that we treated each of you as a father deals with his own children: ¹²encouraging, comforting, and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who is calling you into his kingdom and glory.

¹³There is also another reason we give thanks to God unceasingly, namely, when you received God's word, which you heard from us, you did not receive it as the word of men but as the word of God (as it really is), which is now at work in you who believe.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 22:34–46

³⁴When they heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees met together. ³⁵One of them who was an expert in the law asked him a question, trying to trap him. ³⁶“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?”

³⁷Jesus said to him, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹The second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments.”

⁴¹While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: ⁴²“What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”

They said to him, “The Son of David.”

⁴³He said to them, “Then how can David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴The Lord said to my Lord,

‘Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies

under your feet’?

⁴⁵“So if David calls him Lord, how is he his son?”

⁴⁶No one was able to answer him a word, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Proper 26

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Old Testament / First Reading

Micah 3:5-12

⁵This is what the LORD says concerning the prophets who mislead my people:

Give them something to chew with their teeth, and they declare peace,
but they declare a holy war against anyone who doesn't put something into their mouths.

⁶Therefore, a night without prophetic vision will come upon you.

Darkness will come upon you, without any omens from God.

The sun will set for the prophets,
and daytime will become dark for them.

⁷The seers will be ashamed,
and the fortune tellers will hide in disgrace.

They will all cover their mouths,
because there will be no answer from God.

⁸I, on the other hand, I am full of power from the Spirit of the LORD,
full of judgment and strength,
to declare Jacob's sinful rebellion to him
and Israel's sin to him.

⁹Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob.

Listen attentively, leaders of the house of Israel,
you who have contempt for justice and pervert everything that is right,

¹⁰you who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with injustice.

¹¹Her leaders render verdicts for a bribe,
and her priests issue rulings for a payoff.

Her prophets foretell the future for silver,
yet they lean on the LORD and say,

"The LORD is in our midst, isn't he? Disaster will not come upon us."

¹²Therefore, because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field.

Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins,
and the Temple Mount will become a wooded hill.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Therefore, beyond this, brothers, just as you received instruction from us about how you are to walk so as to please God (as indeed you are doing), we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that you do so even more. ²To be sure, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

³Indeed, this is God's will: that you be sanctified, namely, that you keep yourselves away from sexual immorality. ⁴He wants each of you to learn to obtain a wife for yourself in a way that is holy and

honorable, ⁵not in lustful passion like the heathen, who do not know God. ⁶No one is to overstep and take advantage of his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we said previously and solemnly testified to it. ⁷For God did not call us for uncleanness, but in sanctification. ⁸Consequently, whoever rejects this is not rejecting a man, but the God who gives you his Holy Spirit.

⁹Concerning brotherly love, there is no need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God, with the result that you love one another. ¹⁰In fact, you are doing so toward all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we encourage you, brothers, to do this even more, ¹¹and to make it your ambition to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, just as we instructed you. ¹²Do this so that you are conducting yourselves decently toward outsiders and are not lacking anything.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 23:1–12

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples. ²He said, “The experts in the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³So practice and observe whatever they tell you. But do not do as they do, because they do not practice what they preach. ⁴They tie up heavy loads, burdens that are hard to carry, and place them on people’s shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to help them. ⁵They do all their works to be seen by people. They make their phylacteries wide and lengthen the fringes of their garments. ⁶They love the place of honor at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷the greetings in the marketplaces, and being called ‘Rabbi’ by people. ⁸But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹Also do not call anyone on earth your ‘Father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰And you are not to be called ‘leaders,’ for you have one Leader, the Christ. ¹¹But the greatest among you will be your servant. ¹²Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

Proper 27

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Old Testament / First Reading

Amos 5:18-24

¹⁸Woe to those who long for the Day of the LORD!

What good will the Day of the LORD be for you?

It will be darkness and not light.

¹⁹It will be as if a man flees from a lion,

but a bear meets him,

or he enters a house and rests his hand on a wall,

but a snake bites him.

²⁰Will not the Day of the LORD be darkness and not light,
gloom without a trace of brightness?

²¹I hate, I reject, your festivals!

I do not delight in the aroma of the sacrifices at your sacred convocations.

²²Even if you offer up to me your whole burnt offerings and your grain offerings,

I will not accept them.

I will not pay any attention to your fellowship offerings of fattened calves.

²³Get the noise of your songs away from me!

I will not listen to the music of your harps.

²⁴But let justice roll like the waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you do not grieve in the same way as the others, who have no hope. ¹⁴Indeed, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then in the same way we also believe that God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

¹⁵In fact, we tell you this by the word of the Lord: We who are alive and left until the coming of the Lord will certainly not go on ahead of those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore, encourage one another with these words.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 25:1–13

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish ones took their lamps, they did not take any oil with them; ⁴but the wise took oil in their containers with their lamps. ⁵While the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ ⁷Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise answered, ‘No, there may not be enough for us and for you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰But while they were away buying oil, the bridegroom came. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. ¹¹Later, the other virgins also came and said, ‘Lord, Lord, let us in.’ ¹²But he answered, ‘Amen^a I tell you: I do not know you.’ ¹³Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs

Proper 28

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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Old Testament / First Reading

Zephaniah 1:7-16

⁷Keep silent before the LORD God, for the Day of the LORD is at hand. Yes, the LORD has prepared a sacrifice. He has consecrated those who will attend it. ⁸This is what will take place on the day of the LORD's sacrifice: I will deal with the officials and the king's sons and with all those who wear foreign clothing. ⁹In the same day I will also deal with all who leap over the threshold, who fill their master's house with violence and deceit.

¹⁰On that day, declares the LORD, there will be crying from the Fish Gate and wailing from the Second Quarter and the sound of a great crashing from the hills. ¹¹Wail, you who sit in the marketplace, for all the merchants are destroyed. All those who weigh out silver will be cut off.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, to deal with the men who are complacent, like wine resting on its dregs, who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do anything good. Neither will he do anything bad." ¹³Therefore their wealth will become plunder, and their houses a ruin. They will build houses but never live in them. They will plant vineyards, but they will not drink the wine.

¹⁴The great Day of the LORD is near. It is near and coming very quickly. Listen! The sound of the Day of the LORD! The cry of the warrior is bitter. ¹⁵That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and total destruction, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶a day for the ram's horn and for the battle cry against the fortified cities and against the high towers.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Concerning the times and dates, brothers, there is no need to write to you, ²for you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When people are saying, "Peace and security," destruction will suddenly come on them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will certainly not escape. ⁴But you, brothers, are not in the dark so that this day takes you by surprise like a thief, ⁵for you are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep like everyone else, but rather let us remain alert and sober.

⁷To be sure, those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹You see, God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are also doing.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 25:14–30

¹⁴“You see, the kingdom of heaven is like a man going on a journey. He called his servants and entrusted his possessions to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to still another one talent, each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The servant who had received the five talents immediately put them to work and gained five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the servant who had received the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸But the servant who had received one talent went away, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹“After a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The servant who received the five talents came and brought five more talents. He said, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.’

²¹“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’

²²“The servant who received the two talents came and said, ‘Master, you entrusted me with two talents. See, I have gained two more talents.’

²³“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’

²⁴“Then the servant who received one talent came and said, ‘Master, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter seed. ²⁵Since I was afraid, I went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.’

²⁶“His master answered him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! You knew that I reap where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter seed? ²⁷Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers so that when I came I would get my money back with interest. ²⁸Take the talent away from him and give it to the servant who has the ten talents. ²⁹Because everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ³⁰Throw that worthless servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Proper 29

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Old Testament / First Reading

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

¹¹For this is what the LORD God says. Here I am. I myself will seek the welfare of my flock and carefully search for them. ¹²As a shepherd searches for his flock when his sheep that were with him have been scattered, so I will search for my flock and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own soil. I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys, and in all the settlements of the land. ¹⁴I will lead them into good pasture, and their grazing land will be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and they will pasture on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will shepherd my flock. I myself will let them lie down, declares the LORD God. ¹⁶I will seek the lost. I will bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured. I will strengthen the weak. I will destroy the fat and the strong, and I will shepherd them with justice.

²⁰Therefore, this is what the LORD God says to them. I myself am going to judge between the fat sheep and the thin sheep. ²¹Because you have shoved them with your side and shoulder and butted all the weak ones with your horns, until you scattered them abroad, ²²I will save my flock so that they will not become plunder anymore. In this way I will judge between one sheep and another.

²³Then I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he will tend them. My servant David will tend them, and he will be their shepherd. ²⁴I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be the prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:20–28

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. ²²For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ's people, at his coming. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has done away with every other ruler and every other authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign "until he has put all his enemies under his feet." ²⁶Death is the last enemy to be done away with. ²⁷Certainly, "he has put all things in subjection under his feet." Now when it says that all things have been put in subjection, obviously that does not include the one who subjected all things to him. ²⁸But when all things have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him, in order that God may be all in all.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 25:31–46

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. ³⁶I was lacking clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’

³⁷“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or lacking clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

⁴⁰“The King will answer them, ‘Amen^a I tell you: Just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.’

⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you did not give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you did not give me anything to drink. ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, lacking clothes and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not take care of me.’

⁴⁴“Then they will also answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or lacking clothes or sick or in prison and did not serve you?’

⁴⁵“At that time he will answer them, ‘Amen I tell you: Just as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it for me.’ ⁴⁶And they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

^a Usually, people say *Amen* at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is *I solemnly tell you the truth*. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs