

The Season after Pentecost

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

Revised October 17, 2018

Holy Trinity Sunday

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year C
Evangelical Heritage Version®

Old Testament / First Reading

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Do you hear Wisdom calling out?

Do you hear Understanding raising her voice?

²On the hills above the roads,
she takes her stand at the crossroads.

³Beside the gates leading into the city,
at the entrance to the doorways, she cries out:

⁴I call to you men,
and I raise my voice to the people.

²²The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his way,
before his works of long ago.

²³From eternity I was appointed,
from the beginning, from before the origin of the earth.

²⁴When there were no deep waters, I was brought forth,
when there were no springs filled with water.

²⁵Before the mountains were settled in place,
before the hills, I was brought forth,

²⁶when he had not yet made land or fields
or the first dust of the world.

²⁷When he established the heavens, I was there.
When he drew the horizon around the surface of the deep,

²⁸when he placed the clouds in the sky above,
when the fountains of the deep gushed out,

²⁹when he established his decree for the sea,
so that the waters could not go beyond the limit set by his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,

³⁰I was beside him as a master craftsman.

I was his joy day after day.

I rejoiced in his presence at all times.

³¹I rejoiced in his inhabited world.

I was delighted with the children of Adam.

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

John 8:48–59

⁴⁸The Jews responded, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

⁴⁹Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon. On the contrary, I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I do not seek my own glory. There is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹Amen, Amen, I tell you: If anyone holds on to my word, he will certainly never see death.”

⁵²So the Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets. Yet you say, ‘If anyone holds on to my word, he will certainly never taste death.’ ⁵³You are not greater than our father, Abraham, are you? He died. And the prophets died. Who do think you are?”

⁵⁴Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, about whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ ⁵⁵Yet you do not really know him, but I do know him. If I said, ‘I do not know him,’ I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I hold on to his word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham was glad that he would see my day. He saw it and rejoiced.”

⁵⁷The Jews replied, “You aren’t even fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?”

⁵⁸Jesus said to them, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Before Abraham was born, I am.” ⁵⁹Then they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden and left the temple area.

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Proper 3

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year C
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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

Acts 2:14a, 36-47

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

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

³⁷Now when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Gentlemen, brothers, what should we do?"

³⁸Peter answered them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call."

⁴⁰He testified solemnly with many other words and was appealing to them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added.

⁴²They continued to hold firmly to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers. ⁴³Awe came over every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵They were selling their possessions and property and were distributing the proceeds according to what anyone needed.

⁴⁶Day after day, with one mind, they were devoted to meeting in the temple area, as they continued to break bread in their homes. They shared their food with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷as

they continued praising God and being viewed favorably by all the people. Day after day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Holy Gospel

Luke 6:(20–26) 27–42

²⁰He lifted up his eyes to his disciples and said:

Blessed are you who are poor,
because yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹Blessed are you who hunger now,
because you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
because you will laugh.

²²Blessed are you whenever people hate you,
and whenever they exclude and insult you
and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man.

²³“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy because of this: Your reward is great in heaven! The fact is, their fathers constantly did the same things to the prophets.

²⁴But woe to you who are rich,
because you are receiving your comfort now.

²⁵Woe to you who are well fed now,
because you will be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,
because you will be mourning and weeping.

²⁶Woe to you when all people speak well of you,
because that is how their fathers constantly treated the false prophets.

²⁷“But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹If someone strikes you on one cheek, offer the other too. If someone takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes away your things, do not demand them back.

³¹“Treat others just as you would want them to treat you. ³²If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? To be sure, even the sinners love those who love them. ³³And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners do the same thing. ³⁴If you lend to those from whom you expect to be repaid, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners lend to sinners in order to be paid back in full. ³⁵Instead, love your enemies, do good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the unthankful and the evil. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap. In fact, the measure with which you measure will be measured back to you.”

³⁹He also told them a parable: “A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Won’t they both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but fail to notice the beam in your own eye? ⁴²Or how can you tell your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck in your eye,’ when you do not see the beam in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck in your brother’s eye.

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Proper 4

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

1 Kings 8:22-24, 27-29, 41-43

²²Then Solomon stood in front of the altar in the presence of the whole congregation of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ²³He said:

O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens above or on the earth below. You keep the covenant of mercy and faithfulness with your servants who walk before you with all their heart. ²⁴You have kept the word which you spoke to your servant, my father David. What you have said with your mouth you have fulfilled with your hand, as it is today.

²⁷But will God really dwell on the earth? In truth, the heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this house, which I have built! ²⁸But turn your face toward the prayer of your servant and toward his plea for mercy. O LORD my God, listen to the cry and the prayer which your servant offers before you today.

²⁹Let your eyes be open toward this house night and day, toward this place where you said, “My Name will be there,” to hear the prayer which your servant offers toward this place.

⁴¹Also for the foreigner, who is not one of your people Israel, but who comes from a distant land because of your Name ⁴²(for they will hear about your great Name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, and they will come and pray toward this house), ⁴³for that foreigner, hear in heaven, which is your dwelling place, and do everything for which that foreigner cries out to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your Name and fear you, just as your people Israel do, and because they know that your Name is proclaimed in this house which I have built.

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 1:1-12

Paul, an apostle—not from men, nor through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— ²and all of the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴He gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father— ⁵to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

⁶I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ, for a different gospel, ⁷which is really not another gospel at all. There are, however, some who are trying to disturb you by perverting the gospel of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven would preach any gospel other than the one we preached to you—a curse on him! ⁹As we have said before, so I now say again: If anyone preaches to you any gospel other than the one you received—a curse on him!

¹⁰Am I now seeking the favor of people or of God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to gain the approval of people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

¹¹But I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹²For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation from Jesus Christ.

Holy Gospel

Luke 7:1–10

After Jesus had finished saying all these things to the people who were listening, he went into Capernaum. ²A centurion's servant, who was valuable to him, was sick and about to die. ³When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they begged him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵because he loves our nation, and he built our synagogue for us."

⁶Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to tell Jesus, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, because I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. ⁷That is why I did not consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁸For I am also a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes; and to another one, 'Come!' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

⁹When Jesus heard these things, he was amazed at him. He turned to the crowd that was following him and said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel." ¹⁰And when the men who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.

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Proper 5

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Old Testament / First Reading

1 Kings 17:17-24

¹⁷After these events, the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. The illness became worse until he stopped breathing.

¹⁸Then she said to Elijah, “What is the issue between us, man of God? Have you come to remind me of my sins and to kill my son?”

¹⁹He said to her, “Bring your son to me.” Then he took him and carried him to the upstairs room where he was living, and he laid him on his bed. ²⁰Then he cried out to the LORD, “O LORD, my God, have you sent tragedy on this woman with whom I am staying by killing her son?”

²¹Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times, and he cried out to the LORD, “O LORD, my God, let this boy’s soul return to his body!” ²²The LORD listened to Elijah’s voice, and the boy’s soul returned to his body, and he came to life. ²³Then Elijah took the boy and brought him down to the house from his upstairs room, and he gave him to his mother.

Elijah said, “See, your son is alive!”

²⁴The woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is true.”

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 1:11–24

¹¹But I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹²For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation from Jesus Christ.

¹³Certainly you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God to an extraordinary degree and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my own people, because I was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵However, God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶to reveal his Son in me, so that I would preach him among the Gentiles. At that time, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, ¹⁷and I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. Instead I went away into Arabia, and then I returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸Next, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to meet Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But I saw none of the other apostles, except James, the Lord’s brother. ²⁰(Now about the things I am writing to you—look, I assure you in the presence of God that I am not lying.) ²¹Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²²I was still personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³They heard only: “The one who was once persecuting us is now preaching the faith that he once tried to destroy.” ²⁴And they were praising God for what happened to me.

Holy Gospel

Luke 7:11–17

¹¹Soon afterward Jesus went on his way to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd were traveling with him. ¹²As he was approaching the town gate, there was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother. She was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not cry.” ¹⁴He went up to the open coffin, touched it, and the pallbearers stopped. He said, “Young man, I say to you, get up!” ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

¹⁶Fear gripped all of them, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us” and “God has visited his people!” ¹⁷This was reported about him in all of Judea and in all the surrounding countryside.

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Proper 6

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

2 Samuel 11:26-12:10, 13-14

²⁶The wife of Uriah the Hittite heard that her husband was dead, so she mourned for her husband. ²⁷When her mourning was completed, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife. She gave birth to a son for him. But what David had done was evil in the eyes of the LORD.

^{12:1}So the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came and told him this:

There were two men in a city. One was rich and one poor. ²The rich man had a large number of flocks and herds. ³The poor man did not own anything except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He raised it so that it grew up together with him and his children. It ate from his food and drank from his cup. It slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. ⁴When a traveler came to the rich man, the rich man was unwilling to take an animal from his flock or from his herd to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. So he took the lamb from the poor man and prepared it for the man who had come to him.

⁵David's anger flared up against that man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this is as good as dead. ⁶In place of that lamb, he will restore four lambs, because he did this and had no pity."

⁷Nathan told David, "You are the man. This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says."

I anointed you king over Israel. I rescued you from the hand of Saul. ⁸I gave the house of your master to you, and I gave the wives of your master into your embrace. I gave you the house of Israel and the house of Judah. If this was too little, I would have added even more. ⁹Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in his eyes? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword. You have taken his wife as your own wife. You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰So now the sword will not depart from your house forever, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife."

¹³David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

Nathan said to David, "The LORD himself has put away your sin. You will not die. ¹⁴Nevertheless, because by this deed you have treated the LORD with utter contempt, the child that is born to you shall surely die."

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 2:15–21; 3:10–14

¹⁵"We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners. ¹⁶We know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. So we also believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. ¹⁷But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were also found to be sinners, then is Christ a servant of sin? Certainly not!

¹⁸“In fact, if I build up again those things that I destroyed, I bring on myself the judgment of being a lawbreaker. ¹⁹Indeed, through the law I died to the law that I might live for God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹I do not regard the grace of God as nothing. As a matter of fact, if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nothing!”

^{3:10}In fact, those who rely on the works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the law.” ¹¹Clearly no one is declared righteous before God by the law, because “The righteous will live by faith.” ¹²The law does not say “by faith.” Instead it says, “The one who does these things will live by them.”

¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. As it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” ¹⁴He redeemed us in order that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that we would receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Holy Gospel

Luke 7:36–8:3

³⁶A certain one of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him. Jesus entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. ³⁷Just then a sinful woman from that town learned that he was reclining in the Pharisee’s house. She brought an alabaster jar of perfume, ³⁸stood behind him near his feet weeping, and began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she began to wipe them with her hair while also kissing his feet and anointing them with the perfume. ³⁹When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would realize who is touching him and what kind of woman she is, because she is a sinner.”

⁴⁰Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

He said, “Teacher, say it.”

⁴¹“A certain moneylender had two debtors. The one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he forgave them both. So, which of them will love him more?”

⁴³Simon answered, “I suppose the one who had the larger debt forgiven.”

Then he told him, “You have judged correctly.” ⁴⁴Turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house, but you did not give me water for my feet. Yet she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You did not give me a kiss, but she, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfume. ⁴⁷Therefore I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; that is why she loved so much. But the one who is forgiven little loves little.” ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins have been forgiven.”

⁴⁹Those reclining at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

⁵⁰He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

^{8:1}Soon afterward Jesus was traveling from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven

demons had gone out; ³Joanna, the wife of Cuza, Herod's household manager; Susanna; and many others who provided support for them out of their own possessions.

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Proper 7

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

Isaiah 65:1-9

I was available to those who did not ask.

I let myself be found by those who did not seek me.

I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that did not call on my name.

²I reached out my hands all day to a stubborn people,
who are walking in a way that is not good,
who follow their own ideas.

³This people continually provokes me to anger, right to my face,
by sacrificing in the groves,
by burning incense on the bricks.

⁴They sit in tombs
and keep their vigils all night.
They eat the flesh of pigs,
and broth made from unclean meat is in their pots.

⁵They say, "Keep to yourself.
Do not touch me because I am too holy for you."
These people are smoke in my nostrils,
like a fire burning all day.

⁶Look, I have put it in writing.
I will not be silent until I repay them.
I will repay into their lap

⁷ both their guilt and the guilt of their fathers,
says the LORD.

Because they burned incense upon the mountains,
and upon the hills they ridiculed me,
so I will measure out their full pay into their lap.

⁸This is what the LORD says.
Just as sweet wine is found in the grape cluster,
so that someone says, "Do not destroy it
because there is a blessing in it,"
so I will act in the same way for the sake of my servants,
in order not to destroy the whole people.

⁹I will bring forth offspring from Jacob,
and from Judah those who will inherit my mountains,
so that my chosen ones will possess the land,
and my servants will dwell there.

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 3:23–4:7

²³But before this faith came, we were held in custody under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith was revealed. ²⁴So the law was our chaperone until Christ, so that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵But now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a chaperone.

²⁶In fact, you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷Indeed, as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is not Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one and the same in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants and heirs according to the promise.

^{4:1}What I am saying is this: As long as the heir is a young child, he is no different from a slave. Although he is owner of everything, ²he is still under guardians and managers until the day set by his father. ³So also, when we were younger children, we were enslaved under the basic principles of the world. ⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, "Abba, Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

Holy Gospel

Luke 8:26–39

²⁶They sailed down to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across from Galilee. ²⁷When Jesus stepped ashore, a man from the town met him. He was possessed by demons and for a long time had not worn any clothes. He did not live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What do I have to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torment me!" ²⁹For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. In fact, the unclean spirit had seized him many times. He was kept under guard, and although he was bound with chains and shackles, he would break the restraints and was driven by the demon into deserted places.

³⁰Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Legion," because many demons had gone into him. ³¹They were begging Jesus that he would not order them to go into the abyss. ³²A herd of many pigs was feeding there on the mountain. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he gave them permission. ³³The demons went out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

³⁴When those who were feeding the pigs saw what happened, they ran away and reported it in the town and in the countryside. ³⁵People went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet. He was clothed and in his right mind, and the people were afraid. ³⁶Those who saw it told them how the demon-possessed man was saved. ³⁷The whole crowd of people from the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were gripped with great fear.

As Jesus got into the boat and started back, ³⁸the man from whom the demons had gone out begged to be with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Return to your home and tell how much

God has done for you.” Then he went through the whole town proclaiming what Jesus had done for him.

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Proper 8

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

1 Kings 19:9b-21

Then the word of the LORD suddenly came to him saying, “Why are you here, Elijah?”

¹⁰He said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life.”

¹¹Then the LORD said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is passing by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains and shattered rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind.

After the wind came an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

¹²After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire.

After the fire there was a soft, whispering voice.

¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak, and he went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. Then a voice came to him and said, “Why are you here, Elijah?”

¹⁴He said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life.”

¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, “Go back the way you came and go to the Wilderness of Damascus. When you get there, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶You will also anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill, and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. ¹⁸But I have preserved in Israel seven thousand whose knees have not bent to Baal and whose lips have not kissed him.”

¹⁹So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. Elisha was doing the plowing with twelve teams of oxen in front of him, and he himself was driving the twelfth team. Elijah crossed over to him and threw his cloak over him. ²⁰Then Elisha left the oxen and ran after Elijah. He said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother good-bye! Then I will follow you.”

Then Elijah said, “Go back! For what have I done to you?”

²¹So Elisha turned back from following him. Then he took the team of oxen and slaughtered them. Using the equipment from the oxen as fuel, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he got up, followed Elijah, and served him.

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 5:1, 13–25

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not allow anyone to put the yoke of slavery on you again.

¹³After all, brothers, you were called to freedom. Only do not use your freedom as a starting point for your sinful flesh. Rather, serve one another through love. ¹⁴In fact, the whole law is summed up in this one statement: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵But if you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶What I am saying is this: Walk by the spirit, and you will not carry out what the sinful flesh desires. ¹⁷For the sinful flesh desires what is contrary to the spirit, and the spirit what is contrary to the sinful flesh. In fact, these two continually oppose one another, so that you do not continue to do these things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the control of the law.

¹⁹Now the works of the sinful flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, complete lack of restraint, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, discord, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and things similar to these. I warn you, just as I also warned you before, that those who continue to do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the spirit, let us also walk in step with it.

Holy Gospel

Luke 9:51–62

⁵¹When the days were approaching for him to be taken up, Jesus was determined to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²He sent messengers ahead of him. They went and entered a Samaritan village to make preparations for him. ⁵³But the people did not welcome him, because he was determined to go to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?”

⁵⁵But he turned and rebuked them. “You don’t know what kind of spirit is influencing you. ⁵⁶For the Son of Man did not come to destroy people’s souls, but to save them.” Then they went to another village.

⁵⁷As they went on the way, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

⁵⁹He said to another man, “Follow me!”

But he said, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰Jesus told him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

⁶¹Another man also said, “I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say good-bye to those at my home.”

⁶²Jesus told him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

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Proper 9

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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 66:10-14

¹⁰Rejoice with Jerusalem and celebrate with her, all you who love her.

Share her joy with her, all you who have been mourning over her,

¹¹so that you may nurse and be satisfied from her comforting breast,
so that you may suck and find delight from her milk-filled breasts.

¹²Yes, this is what the LORD says.

I am ready to extend peace to her like a river,
and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream.

You will be nursed. You will be carried on her side,
and you will be bounced on her knees.

¹³Just like a man whom his mother comforts,
in the same way I myself will comfort you,
and you will be comforted concerning Jerusalem.

¹⁴Then you will see, and your heart will be glad.

Like grass you will receive new strength, right down to your bones.

Then the LORD's hand will be known to his servants,
but his fury to his enemies.

Epistle / Second Reading

Galatians 6:1–10, 14–18

Brothers, if a person is caught in some trespass, you who are spiritual should restore such a person in a spirit of humility, carefully watching yourself so that you are not also tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if someone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴Let each person test his own work, and then he will take pride in regard to himself and not his neighbor. ⁵For each man will bear his own burden.

⁶Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with his teacher.

⁷Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. To be sure, whatever a man sows, he will also reap.

⁸Indeed, the one who sows for his own sinful flesh will reap destruction from the sinful flesh. But the one who sows for the spirit will reap eternal life from the spirit. ⁹Let us not become weary of doing good, because at the appointed time we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who belong to the household of faith.

¹⁴But far be it from me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. ¹⁵In fact, in Christ Jesus circumcision or uncircumcision does not matter. What matters is being a new creation. ¹⁶Peace and mercy on those who follow this rule, namely, on the Israel of God.

¹⁷Finally, let no one cause me any trouble, because I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus on my body.

¹⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Holy Gospel

Luke 10:1–20

After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

²He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. So ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go your way. Look, I am sending you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴Do not carry a money bag or traveler’s bag or sandals. Do not greet anyone along the way. ⁵Whenever you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’ ⁶And if a peaceful person is there, your peace will rest on him, but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Remain in that same house, eating and drinking what they give you, because the worker is worthy of his pay. Do not keep moving from house to house. ⁸Whenever you enter a town and they welcome you, eat what is set before you. ⁹Heal the sick who are in the town and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near you.’

¹⁰“But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹‘Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this: The kingdom of God has come near.’ ¹²I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on that day than for that town.

¹³“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to heaven? No, you will be brought down to hell. ¹⁶Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.”

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name!”

¹⁸He told them, “I was watching Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Look, I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. And nothing will ever harm you. ²⁰Nevertheless, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names have been written in heaven.”

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Proper 10

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Old Testament / First Reading

Leviticus (18:1-5) 19:9-18

The LORD spoke to Moses: ²“Speak to the Israelites and tell them this.”

I am the LORD your God.

³You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived. You shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. Do not walk in their religious practices. ⁴Follow my ordinances and keep my regulations by walking in them. I am the LORD your God. ⁵Keep my regulations and my ordinances. Anyone who does them will have life through them. I am the LORD.

⁹When you reap the harvest from your land, you are not to finish reaping all the way to the edge of the field. Do not gather up the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰Do not strip your vineyard clean, and do not pick up the fallen grapes from your vineyard, but leave them for the poor and the alien who live with you. I am the LORD your God.

¹¹You shall not steal. You shall not swindle. You shall not lie to one another. ¹²You shall not swear falsely by my name so that you do not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

¹³You shall not exploit your neighbor. You shall not rob him. You shall not keep the wages of a day laborer with you overnight until morning.

¹⁴You shall not curse a deaf person, nor shall you put an obstacle in front of a blind person, but you must fear your God. I am the LORD.

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

Colossians 1:1–14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints ⁵because of the hope that is stored up for you in heaven. You have already heard about this in the word of truth, the

gospel ⁶that is present with you now. The gospel is bearing fruit and growing in the entire world, just as it also has been doing among you from the day you heard it and came to know the grace of God in truth. ⁷You learned this from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf. ⁸He is the one who told us about your love in the Spirit.

⁹For this reason, from the day we heard about your love, we also have not stopped praying for you. We keep asking that you would be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, ¹⁰so that you might live in a way that is worthy of the Lord. Our goal is that you please him by bearing fruit in every kind of good work and by growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹as you are being strengthened with all power because of his glorious might working in you. Then you will have complete endurance and patience, joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

¹³The Father rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Holy Gospel

Luke 10:25–37

²⁵Just then, an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶“What is written in the law?” he asked him. “What do you read there?”

²⁷He replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself.”

²⁸He said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live.”

²⁹But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell among robbers who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹It just so happened that a priest was going down that way. But when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³²In the same way, a Levite also happened to go there, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³³A Samaritan, as he traveled, came to where the man was. When he saw him, he felt sorry for the man. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He put him on his own animal, took him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵The next day, when he left, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him. Whatever extra you spend, I will repay you when I return.’ ³⁶Which of these three do you think acted like a neighbor to the man who fell among robbers?”

³⁷“The one who showed mercy to him,” he replied.

Then Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

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Proper 11

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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 18:1–10a (10b-14)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he was sitting by the door to his tent during the heat of the day. ²Abraham looked up, and he saw three men standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and he bowed down to the ground. ³He said, “My lord, if I have now found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. ⁴Now let me get a little water so that all of you can wash your feet and rest under the tree. ⁵Let me get some bread so that you can refresh yourselves. After that you may go your way. That is why you have come to your servant.”

They said, “Yes, do as you have said.”

⁶Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quickly prepare twenty quarts of fine flour, knead it, and make some loaves of bread.” ⁷Abraham ran to the herd, brought a good, tender calf, and gave it to the servant. He hurried to prepare it. ⁸He took cheese curds, milk, and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them. He stood beside them under the tree while they ate.

⁹They asked him, “Where is Sarah, your wife?”

He said, “She is over there in the tent.”

¹⁰One of the men said, “I will certainly return to you when this season comes around next year. Then Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Sarah was listening to this from the tent door, which was behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well into old age. Sarah was past the age for childbearing. ¹²Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, will I have pleasure, since my lord is also old?”

¹³The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really give birth to a child though I am old?’ ¹⁴Is anything impossible for the LORD? At the set time next year I will return to you, and Sarah will have a son.”

Epistle / Second Reading

Colossians 1:21–29

²¹At one time, you were alienated from God and hostile in your thinking as expressed through your evil deeds. ²²But now Christ reconciled you in his body of flesh through death, in order to present you holy, blameless, and faultless before him— ²³if you continue steadfast and firm in faith, without being moved away from the hope of the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a minister.

²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church. ²⁵I became a minister of the church for your benefit when God gave me the task of fully proclaiming the word of God, ²⁶namely, the mystery that was hidden for past ages and generations, but now has been revealed to his saints. ²⁷God

wanted to make known to them what is the wealth of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles—this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸We proclaim him as we admonish and teach everyone with all wisdom, so that we might present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹This is the goal I am laboring to reach, striving with his strength, which is powerfully at work in me.

Holy Gospel

Luke 10:38–42

³⁸As they went on their way, Jesus came into a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who was sitting at the Lord's feet and was listening to his word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with all her serving. She came over and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me."

⁴¹The Lord answered and told her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²but one thing is needed. In fact, Mary has chosen that better part, which will not be taken away from her."

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Proper 12

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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 18:(17–19) 20–33

¹⁷The LORD said, “Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? ¹⁹For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household who follow after him to keep the way of the LORD by carrying out righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may deliver to Abraham what he has promised him.”

²⁰So the LORD said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very flagrant, ²¹I will go down now and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has come to me. If not, I will know.”

²²The two men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³Abraham approached him and said, “Will you really sweep away the righteous along with the wicked? ²⁴What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep them away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? ²⁵You would never do such a thing, killing the righteous along with the wicked, treating the righteous the same as the wicked. You would never do such a thing. The Judge of all the earth should do right, shouldn’t he?”

²⁶The LORD said, “If I find fifty righteous people within the city of Sodom, then I will spare the entire place for their sake.”

²⁷Abraham answered, “See now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it on myself to speak to my Lord. ²⁸What if there are five fewer than fifty righteous? Will you destroy the entire city if the number is five short?”

He said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.”

²⁹He spoke to him yet again and said, “What if only forty are found there?”

He said, “I will not do it for the sake of the forty.”

³⁰He said, “Please, do not be angry, my Lord, but I will speak again. What if thirty are found there?”

He said, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.”

³¹He said, “See now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to my Lord. What if there are twenty found there?”

He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty.”

³²He said, “Please, do not be angry, my Lord, but I will speak just once more. What if ten are found there?”

He said, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten.”

³³As soon as he had finished speaking with Abraham, the LORD went on his way, and Abraham returned to his place.

Epistle / Second Reading

Colossians 2:6–15 (16–19)

⁶Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him, ⁷by being rooted and built up in him, and strengthened in the faith just as you were taught, while you overflow in faith with thanksgiving.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, which are in accord with human tradition, namely, the basic principles of the world, but not in accord with Christ. ⁹For all the fullness of God's being dwells bodily in Christ. ¹⁰And you have been brought to fullness in him. Christ is the head over every ruler and authority. ¹¹You were also circumcised in him, with a circumcision not done by human hands, in the putting off of the body of flesh, in the circumcision of Christ, ¹²when you were buried with Christ in baptism. And in baptism you were also raised with him through the faith worked by the God who raised Christ from the dead.

¹³Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. ¹⁴God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵After disarming the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them by triumphing over them in Christ.

¹⁶Therefore, do not let anyone judge you in regard to food or drink, or in regard to a festival or a New Moon or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things that were coming, but the body belongs to Christ. ¹⁸Do not let anyone who enjoys false humility and the worship of angels tell you that you are disqualified from the prize. This person goes into detail about what he has seen. He is puffed up for no reason by the attitude of his sinful flesh. ¹⁹He does not hold on to the head, from whom the whole body grows with the growth that comes from God as it is supported and held together by its sinews and ligaments.

Holy Gospel

Luke 11:1–13

On another occasion, Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples."

²He said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ³Give us each day our daily bread. ⁴Forgive us our sins, as we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'"

⁵He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and tell him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶because a friend of mine who is on a journey has come to me, and I do not have anything to set before him.' ⁷And the one inside replies, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give it to you.' ⁸I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his bold persistence, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

⁹“I tell you, keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep seeking, and you will find. Keep knocking, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives. The one who seeks finds. And to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

¹¹“What father among you, if your son asks for bread, would give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, would give him a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, would give him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-26

²“Nothing but vapor,” Ecclesiastes said. “Totally vapor. Everything is just vapor that vanishes.”

¹²I, Ecclesiastes, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³I applied my heart to seek out and explore with wisdom everything done under the sky. (What a burdensome task God has given the children of Adam to keep them busy!) ¹⁴I have seen all the actions done under the sun, and, look, it is all nothing but vapor. It is all chasing the wind.

^{2:18}I also hated all the results of my hard work, for which I worked so hard under the sun, since I must leave it all to the man who comes after me. ¹⁹And who knows—will he be wise, or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the results of my hard work, for which I worked so hard and so wisely, under the sun. This too is vapor that vanishes.

²⁰So I changed my course, and my heart began to despair over all my hard work at which I worked so hard under the sun. ²¹Sure, there may be a man who has worked hard—wisely, aptly, and skillfully. But he must hand over whatever he accumulated by all his hard work to a man who has not worked hard for it. This too is vapor. It’s so unfair! ²²For what does a man gain through all his hard work, through all the turmoil in his heart as he works so hard under the sun?

²³Bah! Pain fills his days. His occupation is frustration. Even at night his heart does not rest. This too is vapor.

²⁴There is nothing better for a man than to eat and to drink and to find joy in his work. This too, I saw, is from God’s hand. ²⁵For who can eat or enjoy himself apart from him? ²⁶Yes, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness to the man whom he considers good, but to the person who goes on sinning God gives the task of gathering and collecting, but only so that he can give it all to a person whom God considers good. This too is vapor, nothing but chasing wind.

Epistle / Second Reading

Colossians 3:1–11

Therefore, because you were raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵So put to death whatever is worldly in you: sexual immorality, uncleanness, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶It is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ⁷You too once walked in these things, when you were living in them.

⁸But now, you too are to rid yourselves of all of these: wrath, anger, malice, slander, and filthy language from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to each other since you have put off the old self with its practices, ¹⁰and put on the new self, which is continually being renewed in knowledge, according to

the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but rather Christ is all and is in all.

Holy Gospel

Luke 12:13–21

¹³Someone from the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” ¹⁴But Jesus said to him, “Man, who appointed me to be a judge or an arbitrator over you?”

¹⁵Then he said to them, “Watch out and be on guard against all greed, because a man’s life is not measured by how many possessions he has.”

¹⁶He told them a parable: “The land of a certain rich man produced very well. ¹⁷He was thinking to himself, ‘What will I do, because I do not have anywhere to store my crops?’ ¹⁸He said, ‘This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and goods. ¹⁹And I will tell my soul, “Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry.”’

²⁰“But God said to him, ‘You fool, this night your soul will be demanded from you. Now who will get what you have prepared?’

²¹“That is how it will be for anyone who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

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Proper 14

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

Genesis 15:1–6

After these events the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision. He said, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”

²Abram said, “LORD God what can you give me, since I remain childless, and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³Abram also said, “Look, you have given me no offspring, so a servant born in my house will be my heir.”

⁴Just then, the word of the LORD came to him. God said, “This man will not be your heir, but instead one who will come out of your own body will be your heir.” ⁵The LORD then brought him outside and said, “Now look toward the sky and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” He said to Abram, “This is what your descendants will be like.” ⁶Abram believed in the LORD, and the LORD credited it to him as righteousness.

Epistle / Second Reading

Hebrews 11:1–16

Faith is being sure about what we hope for, being convinced about things we do not see. ²For by this faith the ancients were commended in Scripture.

³By faith we know that the universe was created by God’s word, so that what is seen did not come from visible things.

⁴By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice to God than Cain did. By faith he was commended in Scripture as righteous; God testified favorably about his gifts. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵By faith Enoch was taken up, so that he would not experience death, and he was not found because God took him away. In fact, before he was taken away, he was commended in Scripture as one who “pleased God.” ⁶And without faith it is impossible to please God. Indeed, it is necessary for the one who approaches God to believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

⁷By faith Noah, when he was warned about things that had not been seen before, built an ark, in reverent fear, in order to save his family. By it he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that is by faith.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance, and he left without knowing where he was going.

⁹By faith he lived as a stranger in the Promised Land, as if it did not belong to him, dwelling in tents along with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹By faith Abraham also received the ability to conceive children, even though Sarah herself was barren and he was past the normal age, because he considered him faithful who made the promise.

¹²And so from one man, and he as good as dead, descendants were born as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand along the seashore.

¹³One by one, all of these died in faith, without having received the things that were promised, but they saw and welcomed them from a distance. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴Indeed, people who say things like that make it clear that they are looking for a land of their own. ¹⁵And if they were remembering the land they had come from, they would have had an opportunity to return. ¹⁶Instead, they were longing for a better land—a heavenly one. For that reason, God is not ashamed to be called their God, because he prepared a city for them.

Holy Gospel

Luke 12:22–34, 35-40

²²Jesus said to his disciples, “For that reason I tell you, stop worrying about your life, about what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³Certainly life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap; they have no warehouse or barn; and yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than birds! ²⁵And who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his lifespan? ²⁶Since you are not able to do this little thing, why do you worry about the rest? ²⁷Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. But I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of these. ²⁸If this is how God clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith? ²⁹Do not constantly chase after what you will eat or what you will drink. Do not be worried about it. ³⁰To be sure, the nations of the world chase after all of these things, but your Father knows that you need them. ³¹Instead, continue to seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. ³²Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not become old, a treasure in the heavens that will not fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵“Be dressed, ready for service, and keep your lamps burning. ³⁶Be like people waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷Blessed are those servants, whom the master will find watching when he comes. Amen I tell you: He will dress himself and have them recline at the table, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸Even if he comes in the second or third watch, they will be blessed if he finds them alert. ³⁹But know this: If the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰You also be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you are not expecting him.”

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Proper 15

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Old Testament / First Reading

Jeremiah 23:16-29

¹⁶This is what the LORD of Armies says.

Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you.

They are giving you false hope.

They proclaim visions that come from their own hearts
and not from the mouth of the LORD.

¹⁷They keep saying to those who despise me,
“The LORD has said that you will have peace.”

And to everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart,
they say, “No harm will come to you.”

¹⁸But have any of them stood in the council of the LORD,
to see and hear his word?

Who has listened to his word and heard it?

¹⁹Look, a storm from the LORD!

His wrath has gone out,
like a whirlwind twisting down,
whirling over the heads of the wicked.

²⁰The LORD’s anger will not turn back until he has completely fulfilled the purposes of his heart.

In later days you will understand it fully.

²¹I did not send these prophets, yet they ran.

I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

²²But if they had stood in my council,
they would have made my people hear my words,
and they would have turned them from their evil ways
and from their evil deeds.

²³Am I a God who is only nearby, declares the LORD,
and not a God far away?

²⁴Can anyone hide in secret places
so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD.

Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.

²⁵I have heard what the prophets who prophesy lies in my name have said. They say, “I have had a dream! I have had a dream!” ²⁶How long will this be in the hearts of these lying prophets? These prophets proclaim the fantasies of their own hearts. ²⁷They think they can make my people forget my name with the dreams each one tells his neighbor, the way their fathers forgot my name because of Baal. ²⁸Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream. But let the one who has my word speak my word faithfully.

What has chaff to do with grain? declares the LORD. ²⁹Is not my word like a fire? declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?

Epistle / Second Reading

Hebrews 11:17–31 (32–40); 12:1-3

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered Isaac. This man, who received the promises, was ready to offer his only son, ¹⁸about whom it was said, “Through Isaac your offspring will be traced.” ¹⁹He reasoned that God also had the ability to raise him from the dead, and in a figurative sense, Abraham did receive him back from the dead.

²⁰By faith Isaac also blessed Jacob and Esau about things that were going to happen.

²¹By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons and worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

²²By faith Joseph, as he neared the end of his life, mentioned the Exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions about his bones.

²³By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after he was born, because they saw he was a special child, and they were not afraid of the king’s order.

²⁴By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter when he grew up. ²⁵He chose to be mistreated with God’s people rather than enjoy sin for a little while. ²⁶He considered disgrace for the sake of Christ as greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

²⁷By faith he left Egypt without fearing the king’s wrath, because he persevered as one who sees him who is invisible.

²⁸By faith he celebrated the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not strike them down.

²⁹By faith they passed through the Red Sea, as if on dry ground. When the Egyptians tried it, they were drowned.

³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after the people marched around them for seven days.

³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with the unbelievers, because she welcomed the spies in peace.

³²And what more should I say? There would not be enough time for me to continue to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. ³³By faith they conquered kingdoms, carried out justice, obtained things that were promised, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the power of fire, escaped the edges of the sword, were made powerful after being weak, became mighty in battle, and caused foreign armies to flee. ³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection. And others who were tortured did not accept their release, so that they may take part in a better resurrection. ³⁶Still others experienced mocking and lashes, in addition to chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were tempted; they were killed with the sword; they went around in sheepskins and goatskins, needy, afflicted, and mistreated. ³⁸The world was not worthy of them as they wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹All of these were commended in Scripture by faith, yet they did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰because God had planned something better for us, namely, that they would not reach the goal apart from us.

^{12:1}Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us get rid of every burden and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with patient endurance the race that is laid out for us. ²Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal. In view of the joy set before him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of God's throne. ³Carefully consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinful people, so that you do not grow weary and lose heart.

Holy Gospel

Luke 12:49–53 (54–56)

⁴⁹“I came to throw fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already ignited. ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is finished! ⁵¹Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵²Yes, from now on there will be five divided in one household: three against two, and two against three. ⁵³They will be divided: father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

⁵⁴He also said to the crowds, “Whenever you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say that a rainstorm is coming, and so it happens. ⁵⁵And whenever a south wind blows, you say that it is going to be hot, and it happens. ⁵⁶Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but how is it that you do not know how to interpret this present time?

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Proper 16

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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 66:18-23

¹⁸As for me, because of their works and their thoughts,
the time is coming for me to gather people from all nations and all languages.
They will come, and they will see my glory.

¹⁹Then I will set up a sign among them,
and I will send out survivors from among them to the nations,
to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, to those who are archers,
to Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands,
who have not heard my message and have not seen my glory.
Then they will declare my glory among the nations.

²⁰Then they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD. They will bring them on horses and chariots and wagons and mules and dromedaries to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, in the same way that the people of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the LORD's house.²¹Even from among these people I will take priests and Levites, says the LORD.

²²For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will remain standing before me, declares the LORD, in the same way your offspring and your name will stand. ²³As often as one new moon follows another and one Sabbath follows another, all flesh will come to worship before me, says the LORD.

Epistle / Second Reading

Hebrews 12:4–24 (25–29)

⁴You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood in your fight against sin. ⁵Have you also forgotten the encouragement that addresses you as sons?

My son, do not regard the Lord's discipline lightly,
and do not become weary of his correction.

⁶For the Lord disciplines the one whom he loves,
and he corrects every son he accepts.

⁷Endure suffering as discipline. God is dealing with you as sons. Is there a son whose father does not discipline him? ⁸If you are not disciplined (and all of us have received it), then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹In addition, we have earthly fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them. Should we not submit even more to the Father of the spirits and live? ¹⁰They disciplined us for a little while, according to what seemed best to them, but God disciplines us for our good, so that we may have a share in his holiness. ¹¹No discipline seems pleasant when it is happening, but painful, yet later it yields a peaceful harvest of righteousness for those who have been trained by it.

¹²Therefore strengthen your weak hands and feeble knees, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated but rather healed.

¹⁴Pursue peace with everyone and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵Take care so that no one falls short of God's grace and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and so defile many. ¹⁶Take care that no one becomes sexually immoral or worldly, like Esau, who gave away his right as firstborn for a single meal. ¹⁷Certainly you know that afterward he was rejected when he wanted to inherit the blessing, for he found no chance to change his father's mind, even though he sought it with tears.

¹⁸You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to burning fire, to darkness, to gloom, to a raging storm, ¹⁹to the sound of a trumpet, and to a voice that spoke. Those who heard the voice asked that not one more word be added, ²⁰because they could not endure what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned." ²¹The sight was so terrifying that even Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."

²²Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God; to the heavenly Jerusalem; to tens of thousands of angels in joyful assembly; ²³to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; to God, who is the judge of all; to the spirits of righteous people, who have been made perfect; ²⁴to Jesus, the mediator of a new testament; and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better message than the blood of Abel.

²⁵See to it that you do not refuse to listen to the one who is speaking. For if those people did not escape when they refused to listen to the one who spoke God's message on earth, how much less likely is it that we will escape, if we turn away from the one who spoke God's message to us from heaven? ²⁶At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also heaven."

²⁷The words "once more" clearly indicate the removal of the things that are being shaken, that is, the things that have been made, so that the things that cannot be shaken remain permanently. ²⁸Therefore, since we are going to receive an unshakeable kingdom, let us be thankful. This is how we serve God in an acceptable way, with reverence and awe. ²⁹For our God is a consuming fire.

Holy Gospel

Luke 13:22–30

²²He went on his way from one town and village to another, teaching, and making his way to Jerusalem. ²³Someone said to him, "Lord, are only a few going to be saved?"

He said to them, ²⁴"Strive to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. ²⁵Once the master of the house gets up and shuts the door, you will begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open for us!' He will tell you in reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' ²⁶Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' ²⁷And he will say, 'I don't know where you come from. Depart from me, all you evildoers.' ²⁸There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown outside. ²⁹People will come from east and west, from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰And note this: Some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

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Proper 17

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Old Testament / First Reading

Proverbs 25:2-10

²It brings glory to God to hide a matter,
but it brings glory to kings to investigate a matter.

³As heaven is high and earth is deep,
so there is no searching the heart of kings.

⁴Remove impurities from silver,
and a vessel can be cast by a silversmith.

⁵Remove a wicked person from a king's presence,
and his throne will be established with righteousness.

⁶Do not honor yourself in a king's presence.

Do not stand in a place reserved for great people,

⁷because it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than for you to be humiliated before a ruler

whom your eyes have seen.

⁸Do not be in a hurry to go to court.

Otherwise, what will you do afterward,
when your neighbor humiliates you?

⁹Argue your case with your neighbor,
but do not reveal someone else's secret.

¹⁰If you do, the person who hears it will shame you,
and your bad reputation will never leave you.

Epistle / Second Reading

Hebrews 3:1-17

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, focus your attention on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ²He was faithful to the one who appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in God's whole house. ³In fact, Jesus is worthy of greater glory than Moses, in the same way that the builder of a house has more honor than the house. ⁴For every house is built by someone, and God is the one who built everything.

⁵Moses was faithful as a servant within God's whole house by testifying to the things that would be spoken. ⁶But Christ is faithful as a Son over God's house. We are his house, if we hold on firmly to our confidence and the hope about which we boast until the end.

⁷Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

Today, if you hear his voice,

⁸do not harden your hearts

as in the rebellion,

during the time of testing in the wilderness.

⁹Your fathers tested and tried me,
even though they saw my works ¹⁰for forty years.

That is why I was angry with that generation
and said, “In their heart they are always going astray,
and they did not learn my ways.”

¹¹So I swore an oath in my wrath,
“They will never enter my rest.”

¹²Watch out, brothers, so that there is not an evil, unbelieving heart in any of you that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another each and every day, as long as it is called “today,” so that none of you are hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴For we have become people who share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firmly until the end. ¹⁵As it is said:

Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.

¹⁶Who was it who heard and rebelled? Wasn't it all those who left Egypt, led by Moses? ¹⁷And with whom was God angry for forty years? Surely it was with the ones who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness, wasn't it?

Holy Gospel

Luke 14:1–14

One Sabbath day, when Jesus went into the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat bread, they were watching him closely.

²Right in front of him was a man who was suffering from swelling of his body. ³Jesus addressed the legal experts and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?”

⁴But they were silent. So he took hold of the man, healed him, and let him go. ⁵He said to them, “Which of you, if your son or an ox would fall into a well on a Sabbath day, would not immediately pull him out?”

⁶And they could not reply to these things.

⁷When he noticed how they were selecting the places of honor, he told the invited guests a parable. ⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline in the place of honor, or perhaps someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him. ⁹The one who invited both of you may come and tell you, ‘Give this man your place.’ Then you will begin, with shame, to take the lowest place.

¹⁰“But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he will tell you, ‘Friend, move up to a higher place.’ Then you will have honor in the presence of all who are reclining at the table with you.

¹¹“Yes, everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹²He also said to the one who had invited him, “When you make a dinner or a supper, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or rich neighbors, so that perhaps they may also return the favor and pay you back.

¹³“But when you make a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. Certainly, you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous.”

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Proper 18

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Old Testament / First Reading

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

¹⁵See now, today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. ¹⁶This is what I am commanding you today: Love the LORD your God, walk in his ways, and keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances. Then you will live and increase in number, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are going to possess.

¹⁷But if your heart turns away, and you do not listen, and you are lured away, and you bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸then I declare to you today that you will most certainly perish. You will not live a long life on the land that you are about to enter and possess by crossing over the Jordan.

¹⁹I call the heavens and the earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live ²⁰by loving the LORD your God, by listening to his voice, and by clinging to him, because that means life for you, and you will live a long life on your land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Epistle / Second Reading

Philemon 1–21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon, our dear friend and coworker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear about your love and faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints. ⁶I pray that this fellowship of your faith may become active in understanding every good thing that belongs to us in Christ. ⁷For I have received great joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

⁸For that reason, even though I have plenty of boldness in Christ to order you to do what is proper, ⁹I am appealing to you, instead, on the basis of love, just as I, Paul, am an old man and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰I am appealing to you on behalf of my child Onesimus. I became his father while I was in chains. ¹¹There was a time when he was useless to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me. ¹²I have sent him (who is my very heart) back to you. Welcome him. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might serve me in your place while I am in chains for the gospel. ¹⁴But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that your kindness would not be the result of compulsion, but of willingness. ¹⁵Perhaps this is why he was separated from you for a while: so that you would have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave, but as more than a slave, as a dear brother. He certainly is dear to me, but he is even more of a dear brother to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸And if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge it to me. ¹⁹I, Paul, have written this with my own hand: I will repay it—not to mention that you owe me your very self. ²⁰Yes, brother, I am asking for a favor from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

Holy Gospel

Luke 14:25–35

²⁵Large crowds were traveling with Jesus. He turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, if he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, everyone who sees it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, ‘This fellow began to build, but was not able to finish.’ ³¹Or what king, as he goes out to confront another king in war, will not first sit down and consider if he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²And if he is not able, he sends out a delegation and asks for terms of peace while his opponent is still far away. ³³So then, any one of you who does not say farewell to all his own possessions cannot be my disciple. ³⁴Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its flavor, how will it become salty again? ³⁵It is not fit for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Ezekiel 34:11-24

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.

¹⁷What about you, my flock? This is what the LORD God says. I am going to judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats. ¹⁸Isn't it enough for you that you feed on the good pasture? Must you trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? Isn't it enough that you drink the clear water? Must you muddy the rest with your feet? ¹⁹Then my flock has to feed on what your feet have trampled and drink what your feet have muddied. 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 Timothy 1:(5–11) 12–17

⁵The goal of this command is love that comes from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith. ⁶By veering away from these things, some have turned aside into meaningless talk. ⁷They want to be teachers of the law, although they do not comprehend what they are saying or the things they so strongly affirm. ⁸Now, we know that the law is good as long as one uses it correctly—⁹keeping in mind that the law is not laid down for a righteous person, but for lawless and rebellious people, for godless people and sinners, for unholy and worldly people, for those who kill their fathers and those who kill their mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰for sexually immoral people, for homosexuals, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and for whatever else is opposed to sound teaching—¹¹in keeping with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.

¹²I give thanks to the one who empowered me, namely, Christ Jesus our Lord, that he treated me as trustworthy, appointing me into his ministry. ¹³He did this even though formerly I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴The grace of our Lord overflowed on me along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵This saying is trustworthy and worthy of full acceptance: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶But I was shown mercy for this reason: that in me, the worst sinner, Christ Jesus might demonstrate his unlimited patience as an example for those who are going to believe in him, resulting in eternal life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, to the immortal, invisible, only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Holy Gospel

Luke 15:1–10

All the tax collectors and sinners were coming to Jesus to hear him. ²But the Pharisees and the experts in the law were complaining, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³He told them this parable: ⁴“Which one of you, if you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that was lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶and goes home. Then he calls together his friends and his neighbors, telling them, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found my lost sheep!’ ⁷I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who do not need to repent.

⁸“Or what woman who has ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, would not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors and says, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found the lost coin.’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Amos 8:4-7

⁴Listen to this, you who trample on the needy
to wipe out the oppressed from the land,
⁵who say, “When will the New Moon be over so that we can sell grain?
When will the Sabbath end, so that we can open the grain bins?
Then we will make the bushel smaller and make the shekel weight heavier.
We will cheat with dishonest scales.
⁶We will buy the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals.
We will sell the chaff with the grain.”
⁷The LORD swears by the Pride of Jacob,
“I will never forget any of their deeds!”

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Timothy 2:1–15

First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all those who are in authority, in order that we might live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. ⁷For this testimony, I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I speak the truth. I am not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. ⁹Likewise, I also want women to adorn themselves with respectable clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair, gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. ¹¹A woman should learn in a quiet manner with full submission. ¹²And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. Instead, she is to continue in a quiet manner. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴And it was not Adam who was deceived, but it was the woman who was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵But she will be saved—while bearing children—if they remain in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

Holy Gospel

Luke 16:1–15

Jesus also said to his disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager who was accused of wasting his possessions. ²The rich man called him in and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you can no longer be manager.’

³“The manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, since my master is taking away the management position from me? I am not strong enough to dig. I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from my position as manager, people will receive me into their houses.’

⁵“He called each one of his master’s debtors to him. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶He said, ‘Six hundred gallons of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write three hundred.’ ⁷Then he said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘Six hundred bushels of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and write four hundred and eighty.’

⁸“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the children of the light. ⁹I tell you, make friends for yourselves with unrighteous so that when it runs out, they will welcome you into the eternal dwellings. ¹⁰The person who is faithful with very little is also faithful with much. And the person who is unrighteous with very little is also unrighteous with much. ¹¹So if you have not been faithful with unrighteous *mammon* who will entrust you with what is really valuable? ¹²If you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you something to be your own? ¹³No servant can serve two masters. Indeed, 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*.”

¹⁴The Pharisees, who loved money, also heard all these things and sneered at him. ¹⁵He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the sight of people, but God knows your hearts. In fact, what is highly regarded among people is an abomination in God’s sight.

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Old Testament / First Reading

Amos 6:1-7

Woe to you who are complacent in Zion,
you who feel secure on Mount Samaria,
you distinguished people of the leading nation,
to whom the house of Israel comes.

²Travel to Kalneh and look.

Go from there to Hamath Rabbah,
and go down to Gath of the Philistines.

Are you better than those kingdoms?

Are their territories greater than your territory?

³You who are trying to put off the evil day,
you bring near the session for violence!

⁴Those who lie on ivory beds,
sprawling upon their couches,
eating lambs from the flock
and calves straight from the stall,

⁵improvising tunes on the lyre,
composing music for themselves on musical instruments like David,

⁶drinking large bowls of wine—
they slather themselves with the most expensive perfumed oils,
but they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.

⁷That is why they will go into exile as the first of the exiles.

Those who sprawl out at their feasts for the dead will depart.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Timothy 3:1-13

This saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to become an overseer, he desires a noble task. ²It is necessary, then, for the overseer to be above reproach, the husband of only one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not a violent man but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴It is necessary that he manage his own household well, with all dignity making sure that his children obey him. ⁵(If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he might become conceited and fall into the same condemnation as the Devil. ⁷In addition, he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the Devil's trap.

⁸In the same way, it is necessary that deacons be dignified, not deceitful, not devoted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain— ⁹men who hold on to the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience. ¹⁰Let them also be tested first. Then let them serve as deacons, if they are found to be blameless. ¹¹In the same way women must be worthy of respect, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in everything. ¹²Let each deacon be the husband of only one wife, managing his children and his own household well. ¹³Certainly, those who serve well as deacons gain for themselves good standing and great boldness in the faith they have in Christ Jesus.

or

1 Timothy 6:6–19

⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we certainly cannot take anything out. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be satisfied.

⁹Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into complete destruction and utter ruin. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evils. By striving for money, some have wandered away from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But you, O man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of eternal life, to which you were called and about which you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who made a good confession as a witness before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴that you keep this command without spot and without fault, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will make known at the proper time—the blessed and only ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality, who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or is able to see. To him be honor and power forever! Amen.

¹⁷Instruct those who are rich in this present age not to be arrogant or to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but rather in God, who richly supplies us with all things for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they are storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

Holy Gospel

Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen, living in luxury every day. ²⁰A beggar named Lazarus had been laid at his gate. Lazarus was covered with sores and ²¹longed to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Besides this, the dogs also came and licked his sores. ²²Eventually the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In hell, where he was in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴He called out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me! Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in misery in this flame.’

²⁵“But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus received bad things. But now he is comforted here, and you are in misery. ²⁶Besides all this, a great chasm has been set in place between us and you, so that those who want to cross from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

²⁷“He said, ‘Then I beg you, father, send him to my father’s home, ²⁸because I have five brothers—to warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹“Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets. Let them listen to them.’

³⁰“No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

³¹“Abraham replied to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4

The threatening oracle which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

²How long, LORD, must I cry for help, but you do not listen?

I call out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save!

³Why do you cause me to see injustice?

Why do you overlook misery?

Devastation and violence confront me.

There is strife, and tensions rise.

⁴For this reason the law has become powerless.

Justice is never carried out.

In fact, the wicked overwhelm the righteous
so that justice is perverted.

⁴For this reason the law has become powerless.

Justice is never carried out.

In fact, the wicked overwhelm the righteous
so that justice is perverted.

^{2:1}I will stand at my watch post and station myself on the city wall. I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer he will give to my complaint.

²Then the LORD answered me. He said:

Record the vision and write it plainly on tablets so that a herald may run with it.

³Indeed, the vision is waiting for the appointed time. It longs for fulfillment and will not prove false. If it seems slow in coming, wait for it, because it will certainly come and will not be delayed.

⁴Look, his soul is puffed up and is not righteous within him,—but the righteous one will live by his faith.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Timothy 1:1–14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in accordance with the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus,

²To Timothy, my child, whom I love:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³I thank God, whom I serve with a clean conscience as my ancestors did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day. ⁴When I remember your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵I remember your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it also lives in you.

⁶For this reason I am reminding you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God did not give us a timid spirit, but a spirit of power and love and sound judgment. ⁸So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Instead, join with me in suffering for the gospel while relying on the power of God. ⁹He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, ¹⁰and it has now been revealed through the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. ¹¹For this gospel I was appointed a herald, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles, ¹²and that is why I am suffering these things. But I am not ashamed, because I know the one in whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

¹³Hold fast to the pattern of sound words that you heard from me, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Through the Holy Spirit, who lives in us, guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you.

Holy Gospel

Luke 17:1–10

Jesus said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! ²It would be better for that person if a millstone would be hung around his neck and he would be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. ³Watch yourselves.

“If your brother sins, rebuke him. If he repents, forgive him. ⁴Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

⁶The Lord said, “If you had faith like a mustard seed, you could tell this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. ⁷Which one of you who has a servant plowing or taking care of sheep will say to him when he comes in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at the table?’ ⁸Won’t the master tell him instead, ‘Prepare my supper, and after you are properly dressed, serve me while I eat and drink. After that you may eat and drink?’ ⁹He does not thank the servant because he did what he was commanded to do, does he? ¹⁰So also you, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants. We have only done what we were supposed to do.’”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Ruth 1:1-19a

During the days of the judges, a famine occurred in the land. So a man left Bethlehem in Judah to stay awhile in the territory of Moab—he, his wife, and his two sons. ²The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were from the clan of Ephrath from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the territory of Moab and remained there.

³But Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, so she was left with her two sons. ⁴They then married Moabite wives. The name of the first was Orpah, and the name of the second was Ruth. They lived there for about ten years. ⁵But Naomi's sons, Mahlon and Kilion, also died. So the woman was left without her two children and without her husband.

⁶Then Naomi set out with her daughters-in-law to return from the territory of Moab, because while she was in the territory of Moab, she had heard that the LORD had graciously visited his people by providing them with food. ⁷So she left the place where she had been, and her two daughters-in-law left with her. They set out on the road to return to the land of Judah.

⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back. Both of you return to your mother's house. May the LORD show you kindness as you have shown kindness to the dead and to me. ⁹May the LORD grant that each of you finds security in the house of a husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept loudly.

¹⁰But they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."

¹¹Then Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Am I going to give birth to any more sons who could become your husbands? ¹²Turn back, my daughters. Go! For I am too old to be married to another husband. Suppose I say, 'I have hope, and I will be married to another husband tonight, and I will even give birth to sons.' ¹³Would you wait for them until they grow up? On the basis of that hope would you give up the chance to marry another husband? No, my daughters. It is much more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has reached out against me."

¹⁴They once again wept loudly. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth would not let her go.

¹⁵Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and to her gods. Go back! Follow your sister-in-law."

¹⁶But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to abandon you or to turn back from following you. Because wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you make your home, I will make my home. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. ¹⁷Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely and double it if anything but death separates me from you."

¹⁸When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

¹⁹Then the two of them traveled until they arrived at Bethlehem.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Timothy 2:1–13

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²Entrust the things you heard from me, in the presence of many witnesses, to faithful men who will also be able to teach others.

³Share hardships as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in the affairs of everyday life. If he does, he will not please the one who enlisted him. ⁵Also, if someone competes as an athlete, he does not receive a crown unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶The hardworking farmer should receive a share of the crops first. ⁷Think about what I am saying, because the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

⁸Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, a descendant of David, in accordance with my gospel, ⁹for which I am suffering, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰For this reason I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, along with eternal glory. ¹¹This saying is trustworthy:

Indeed, if we have died with him, we will also live with him;

¹²If we endure, we will also reign with him;

If we deny him, he will also deny us;

¹³If we are faithless, he remains faithful, because he cannot deny himself.

Holy Gospel

Luke 17:11–19

¹¹On another occasion, as Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, he was passing along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²When he entered a certain village, ten men with leprosy met him. Standing at a distance, ¹³they called out loudly, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

¹⁴When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” As they went away they were cleansed.

¹⁵One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice. ¹⁶He fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, thanking him. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Jesus responded, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸Was no one found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹Then he said to him, “Get up and go your way. Your faith has saved you.”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 32:22–30

²²He got up that night and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of the Jabbok. ²³He took them and sent them across the stream, and he also sent his possessions across. ²⁴Jacob was left alone, and he wrestled with a man there until daybreak. ²⁵When the man saw that he could not defeat him, he touched the socket of his thigh, and the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated as he wrestled. ²⁶The man said, "Let me go. It's daybreak."

Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

²⁷Then he said to him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Jacob."

²⁸Then he said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have fought with God and with men, and you have won."

²⁹Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name."

He said, "Why do you ask what my name is?" Then he blessed him there.

³⁰Jacob named the place Peniel, because he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life has been spared."

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Timothy 3:14–4:5

¹⁴As for you, continue in the things you have learned and about which you have become convinced. You know from whom you learned them ¹⁵and that from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be complete, well equipped for every good work.

^{4:1}I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom: ²Preach the word. Be ready whether it is convenient or not. Correct, rebuke, and encourage, with all patience and teaching. ³For there will come a time when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, because they have itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in line with their own desires. ⁴They will also turn their ears away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

⁵As for you, keep a clear head in every situation. Bear hardship. Do the work of an evangelist. Fulfill your ministry.

Holy Gospel

Luke 18:1–8

Jesus told them a parable about the need to always pray and not lose heart: ²“There was a judge in a certain town who did not fear God and did not care about people. ³There was a widow in that town, and she kept going to him, saying, ‘Give me justice from my adversary!’ ⁴For some time he refused, but after a while he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God or care about people, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice so that she will not wear me out with her endless pleading.’”

⁶The Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷Will not God give justice to his chosen ones, who are crying out to him day and night? Will he put off helping them? ⁸I tell you that he will give them justice quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Genesis 4:1–15

The man was intimate with Eve, his wife. She conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, “I have gotten a man with the LORD.”² She also gave birth to Cain’s brother Abel.

Abel tended sheep, but Cain worked the ground.³ As time passed, one day Cain brought an offering to the LORD from the fruit of the soil.⁴ Abel also brought some of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions. The LORD looked favorably on Abel and his offering,⁵ but he did not look favorably on Cain and his offering. Cain was very angry, and his face showed it.

⁶The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why do you have that angry look on your face? ⁷If you do good, will you not be lifted up? If you do not do good, sin is crouching at the door. It has a strong desire for you, but you must rule over it.”

⁸Cain said to Abel, his brother, “Let’s go into the field.” When they were in the field, Cain attacked Abel, his brother, and killed him.

⁹The LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel, your brother?”

He said, “I don’t know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰The LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the soil. ¹¹Now you are cursed and sent away from the soil which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹²When you work the soil, it will no longer give its strength to you. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”

¹³Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is too great for me to bear. ¹⁴Look, today you have driven me away from the soil. I will be hidden from your face, and I will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth. And whoever finds me will kill me.”

¹⁵The LORD said to him, “No! If anyone kills Cain, he will face sevenfold revenge.” And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that anyone who found him would not strike him down.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18

⁶You see, I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. ⁸From now on, there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness. The Lord, the righteous Judge, will give it to me on that day, and not only to me but also to everyone who loved his appearing.

¹⁶At my first hearing, no one came to my defense, but everyone deserted me. May it not be counted against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message would be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles would hear it, and I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Holy Gospel

Luke 18:9–17

⁹Jesus told this parable to certain people who trusted in themselves (that they were righteous) and looked down on others: ¹⁰“Two men went up to the temple courts to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself like this: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people, robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week. I give a tenth of all my income.’

¹³“However the tax collector stood at a distance and would not even lift his eyes up to heaven, but was beating his chest and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’

¹⁴“I tell you, this man went home justified rather than the other, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹⁵People were bringing even their babies to Jesus, so that he would touch them. When the disciples saw this, they began to rebuke them. ¹⁶But Jesus invited them, saying, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷Amen I tell you: Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Isaiah 1:10-18

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom!

Listen to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

¹¹What do your many sacrifices mean to me? says the LORD.

I have more than enough rams as burnt offerings
and enough fat from well-fed animals.

I am not pleased with the blood of bulls
or the blood of lambs and male goats.

¹²When you come to appear before me,
who has asked for this from your hands:
this trampling on my courts?

¹³Stop bringing worthless offerings!
Your incense is an abomination to me.
I cannot stand your sinful assemblies
on the new moons, Sabbaths, and holy days.

¹⁴Deep in my soul I hate your new moons and your appointed feasts.
They have become a burden to me.
I am tired of putting up with them.

¹⁵When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you.
Indeed, even though you make many prayers, I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood.

¹⁶Wash yourselves. Purify yourselves.
Remove your evil deeds from my sight.
Stop doing evil. ¹⁷Learn to do good.
Seek justice. Relieve the oppressed.
Seek justice for the fatherless. Plead for the widow.

¹⁸Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD.
Though your sins are like scarlet, they will be as white as snow.
Though they are as red as crimson, they will be like wool.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Thessalonians 1:1–5 (6-10) 11–12

Paul, Silas, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³We are always obligated to thank God for you, brothers, as is fitting, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love that each and every one of you has for one another is increasing. ⁴So we ourselves boast about you in God's churches in regard to your patient endurance and faith in all your persecutions and in the trials that you are enduring. ⁵This is evidence of God's righteous verdict that resulted in your being counted worthy of God's kingdom, for which you also suffer.

⁶Certainly, it is right for God to repay trouble to those who trouble you, ⁷and to give relief to you, who are troubled along with us. When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his powerful angels, ⁸he will exercise vengeance in flaming fire on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹Such people will receive a just penalty: eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from his glorious strength, ¹⁰on that day when he comes to be glorified among his saints, and to be marveled at among all those who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

¹¹For this reason, we are always praying for you, that our God will make you worthy of your calling and use his power to fulfill every good desire and work of your faith, ¹²so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and you in him, in keeping with the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy Gospel

Luke 19:1–10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ²A man named Zacchaeus was there. He was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³He was trying to see who Jesus was, but since he was short, he could not see because of the crowd. ⁴He ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus, because he was about to pass by that way. ⁵When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." ⁶He came down quickly and welcomed Jesus joyfully. ⁷When the people saw it, they were all grumbling because he went to be a guest of a sinful man.

⁸Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I am going to give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I will pay back four times as much."

⁹Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

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First Lesson

Exodus 3:1-15

Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, a priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²The Angel of the LORD appeared to him in blazing fire from within a bush. Moses saw that the bush was on fire, but the bush was not burning up. ³So he said, “I will go over and look at this amazing sight—to find out why the bush is not burning up.”

⁴When the LORD saw that Moses had gone over to take a look, God called to him from the middle of the bush and said, “Moses! Moses!”

Moses said, “I am here.”

⁵The LORD said, “Do not come any closer. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶He then said, “I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷The LORD said, “I have certainly seen the misery of my people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry for help because of their slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. ⁸So I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹Now indeed, the Israelites’ cry for help has come to me. Yes, I have seen how the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰Come now, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

¹²So he said, “I will certainly be with you. This will be the sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.”

¹³But Moses said to God, “If I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what should I say to them?”

¹⁴So God replied to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He also said, “You will say this to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.”

¹⁵God also told Moses, “Say this to the Israelites: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is how I am to be remembered from generation to generation.’”

Second Lesson

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8, 13–17

Now, about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together with him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to be quickly shaken from your composure or disturbed by a spirit, a message,

or a letter thought to be from us, which says that the day of the Lord has already come. ³Let no one deceive you in any way, because that day will not come until the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed—the son of destruction. ⁴He opposes and exalts himself above everyone who is called God or every object of worship, so that he sits in the temple of God, displaying himself as God.

⁵Do you not remember that, while I was still with you, I kept telling you these things? ⁶And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷In fact, the mystery of this lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who is now holding him back moves out of the way. ⁸Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy when he appears in splendor at his coming.

¹³But we are always obligated to thank God for you, brothers, loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation by the sanctifying work of the Spirit and faith in the truth. ¹⁴For this reason he also called you through our gospel so that you would obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold on to the teachings that were passed along to you, either by word of mouth or by a letter from us. ¹⁶May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and in his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷encourage your hearts and establish you in every good work and word.

Gospel

Luke 20:27–40

²⁷Some of the Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to him. ²⁸They asked him a question, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies leaving a wife but no children, his brother should take the wife and raise up children for his brother. ²⁹So there were seven brothers. The first took a wife and died childless. ³⁰The second took her as a wife, ³¹and so did the third, and in the same way the seven died and left no children. ³²Finally the woman died too. ³³So in the resurrection, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as a wife.”

³⁴Jesus said to them, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵But those who are considered worthy to experience that age and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶In fact, they cannot die any more, for they are like the angels. They are sons of God, because they are sons of the resurrection.

³⁷“Even Moses showed in the account about the burning bush that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord: ‘The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ ³⁸He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all are alive to him.”

³⁹Some of the experts in the law answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” ⁴⁰Then they no longer dared to ask him anything.

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Old Testament / First Reading

Malachi 4:1-6

Look! The day is coming, burning like a blast furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble. The day that is coming will set them on fire, says the LORD of Armies, a day that will not leave behind a root or branch for them. ²But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise, and there will be healing in its wings. You will go out and jump around like calves from the stall. ³You will trample the wicked. They will surely be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I take action, says the LORD of Armies.

⁴Remember the law of my servant Moses, which I commanded to him at Horeb to serve as statutes and judgments over all Israel.

⁵Look! I am going to send Elijah the prophet to you before the great and fearful day of the LORD comes! ⁶He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise, I will come and strike the land with complete destruction.

Epistle / Second Reading

2 Thessalonians 3:(1-5) 6-13

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us so that the word of the Lord may spread quickly and be glorified just as it was among you. ² Pray also that we may be rescued from evil and wicked people. For not everyone has faith. ³ Still, the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and protect you from the Evil One. ⁴ We also have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we are telling you. ⁵ May the Lord continue to direct your hearts to God's love and Christ's patient endurance.

⁶ We instruct you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid every brother who is walking idly and not in accordance with the teaching that you received from us. ⁷ In fact, you yourselves know how necessary it is for you to imitate us, because we were not idle among you. ⁸ We never ate anyone's bread without paying for it. Instead, with labor and hardship we worked night and day, so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ This was not because we lacked authority, but to provide an example for you to imitate. ¹⁰ In fact, when we were with you, this was our command to you: If anyone does not want to work, he should not eat. ¹¹ Indeed, we hear that some among you are idle, not busy working, but being busybodies. ¹² In the Lord Jesus Christ, we command and urge these people to work quietly and eat their own bread.

¹³ But you, brothers, do not grow weary of doing good.

Holy Gospel

Luke 21:5–28 (29–36)

⁵As some were talking about the temple, how it was decorated with beautiful stones and offerings, Jesus said, ⁶“These things that you see here—the days will come when there will not be one stone left on another—every one will be thrown down.”

⁷They asked him, “Teacher, when will these things happen? And what is the sign that these things are about to happen?”

⁸He said, “Watch out so that you are not deceived! For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and ‘The time is near.’ Do not follow them. ⁹Whenever you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be terrified, for these things must happen first, but the end will not be right then.”

¹⁰Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹There will be great earthquakes, famines, and plagues in various places. There will be horrifying sights and great signs from heaven. ¹²But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, handing you over to synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name’s sake. ¹³It will turn out to be your opportunity to testify. ¹⁴So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand how to defend yourselves, ¹⁵for I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends. They will put some of you to death. ¹⁷You will be hated by all people for my name’s sake. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By patient endurance you will gain your lives.

²⁰“When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let those who are inside the city get out. Let those who are in the country not enter the city. ²²For these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that has been written. ²³How terrible it will be for those who are pregnant and nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. ²⁴They will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken captive to all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And on the earth nations will be in anguish, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the surging waves, ²⁶people fainting from fear and expectation of the things coming on the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸But when these things begin to happen, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is near.”

Luke 21:29–36

²⁹He told them a parable. “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰As soon as they are sprouting leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is actually near. ³¹So also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Amen I tell you: This generation will not pass away until all these things happen. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴“Watch yourselves or else your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the worries of this life, and that day may come on you suddenly. ³⁵For it will come like a trap on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Stay alert all the time, praying that you may be able

to escape all these things that are going to happen and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

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Old Testament / First Reading

Malachi 3:13-18

¹³Your words against me are harsh, says the LORD.

You ask, “How have we spoken against you?” ¹⁴You say, “Serving God is pointless. What have we gained by carefully keeping his requirements and by walking around like mourners before the LORD of Armies? ¹⁵Now we will call the arrogant blessed. Even evildoers are built up. They even test God and get away with it.”

¹⁶Then those who fear the LORD spoke with each other. The LORD gave them his attention and listened. A book of remembrance was written in front of him for those who fear the LORD and have regard for his name.

¹⁷They will be mine, says the LORD of Armies, on the day I make them my treasured possession. I will spare them just as a man spares his son who serves him. ¹⁸Then you will again see the distinction between a righteous person and a wicked person, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

Epistle / Second Reading

Colossians 1:13–20

¹³The Father rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, ¹⁶for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and all things hold together in him.

¹⁸He is also the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that in all things he might have the highest rank. ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰and through him to reconcile all things to himself (whether things on earth or in heaven) by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Holy Gospel

Luke 23:27–43

²⁷A large crowd of people was following him, including women who were mourning and wailing for him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹Be sure of this: The days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that never nursed.’ ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ ³¹For if they do these things to the green wood, what will happen to the dry?”

³²Two other men, who were criminals, were led away with Jesus to be executed.

³³When they came to the place called The Skull, they crucified him there with the criminals, one on his right and the other on his left.

³⁴Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

They cast lots to divide his garments among them. ³⁵The people stood watching. The rulers were ridiculing him, saying, “He saved others. Let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, the Chosen One!”

³⁶The soldiers also made fun of him. Coming up to him, they offered him sour wine, ³⁷saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

³⁸There was also an inscription written above him: “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals hanging there was blaspheming him, saying, “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.”

⁴³Jesus said to him, “Amen I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise.”

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