

The Season after Pentecost

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

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The First Sunday after Pentecost—Holy Trinity

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Genesis 1:1-2:3

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

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

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

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

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

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

²⁴God said, “Let the earth produce living creatures according to their own kind, livestock, creeping things, and wild animals according to their own kind,” and it was so. ²⁵God made the wild

animals according to their own kind, and the livestock according to their own kind, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its own kind. God saw that it was good.

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

²⁷God created the man in his own image.

In the image of God he created him.

Male and female he created them.

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

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

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

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 13:11–14

Finally, brothers, rejoice. Set things in order. Be encouraged. Agree with one another. Be at peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³All the saints greet you.

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Gospel

Matthew 28:16-20

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

Proper 3 (May 24-28)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Isaiah 49:13–18

Shout for joy, O heavens,
and rejoice, O earth.

Let mountains burst forth with shouts of joy,
because the LORD is comforting his people,
and he is showing mercy to his afflicted ones.

¹⁴But Zion said, “The LORD has abandoned me.
The Lord has forgotten me.”

¹⁵Can a woman forget her nursing child
and not show mercy to the son from her womb?
Even if these women could forget,
I will never forget you.

¹⁶Look, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.
Your walls are never out of my sight.

¹⁷Your children are hurrying back.
Those who destroyed and devastated you will depart from you.

¹⁸Lift up your eyes all around and see!
All of them are gathered. They are coming to you.
As surely as I live, declares the LORD,
all of them are like jewelry that you will put on.
You will wear them like a bride.

Second Reading

Philippians 4:8–20

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

¹⁰I rejoice greatly in the Lord now that you have revived your concern for me once again. Actually, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹I am not saying this because I lack anything; in fact, I have learned to be content in any circumstances in which I find myself. ¹²I know what it is to live in humble circumstances, and I know what it is to have more than enough. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, while being full or hungry, while having plenty or not enough. ¹³I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. ¹⁴Nevertheless, you did well by becoming partners with me in my affliction.

¹⁵You Philippians know that in the beginning of your experience with the gospel, when I left Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. ¹⁶Even while I was in Thessalonica, you sent help more than once for my needs. ¹⁷Not that I am seeking a gift, but I am seeking the fruit that adds to your account. ¹⁸I have been paid in full, and I have more than enough. I am fully supplied since I've received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you, a sweet-smelling fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will fully supply your every need, according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever! Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 6:24–34

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

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

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

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

Proper 4 (May 29-June 4)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Deuteronomy 11:18–21, 26-28

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

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

Second Reading

2 Peter 1:19–2:3

We also have the completely reliable prophetic word. You do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Morning Star rises in your hearts, ²⁰since we know this above all else: No prophecy of Scripture comes about from someone's own interpretation. ²¹In fact, no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit.

^{2:1}There were false prophets also among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction on themselves. ²Many will follow their depraved ways, and because of them the way of the truth will be blasphemed. ³In their greed they will exploit you with fabricated messages. Their condemnation announced long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Gospel

Matthew 7:15–29

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. You do not gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, do you? ¹⁷So then, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰So then, by their fruit you will recognize them. ²¹Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and drive out demons in your name and perform

many miracles in your name?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.'

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

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

Proper 5 (June 5-11)

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First Reading

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 Reading

1 Timothy 1:12–17

I 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.

Gospel

Matthew 9:9–13

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

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

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

Proper 6 (June 12-18)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Numbers 27:15–23

Moses spoke to the LORD, ¹⁶“May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the community, ¹⁷who will go out before them and come in before them, who will lead them out and bring them in, so that the community of the LORD will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”

¹⁸The LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and place your hand on him. ¹⁹Have him stand in front of Eleazar the priest and the entire community. You will commission him in their sight. ²⁰You will give some of your authority to him so that the entire Israelite community will listen to him. ²¹He will stand before Eleazar the priest, who will inquire for him before the LORD with the decision of the Urim. He and all the Israelites with him, the entire community, will go out at his command and come in at his command.”

²²Moses did just as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand in front of Eleazar the priest and the entire community. ²³He placed his hands on him and commissioned him, just as the LORD spoke through Moses.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 4:1–7

This is the way a person should think of us: as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. ²In this connection, moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. ³But it is a trivial matter to me if I am evaluated by you or by a day in a human court. Why, I do not even evaluate myself. ⁴I do not in fact know of anything against myself, but I am not justified by this; rather, the one who evaluates me is the Lord. ⁵Therefore judge nothing ahead of time, until the Lord comes. He will bring to light whatever is hidden in darkness and also reveal the intentions of hearts. Then there will be praise for each person from God.

⁶Brothers, I turned these things into a lesson using myself and Apollos as examples. I did this for your benefit, so that you may learn from us not to go beyond what is written. Then you will not be arrogant, favoring one person over the other. ⁷For who makes you so special? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

Gospel

Matthew 9:35-10:8

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

³⁶When he saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were troubled and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful,

but the workers are few. ³⁸Therefore pray that the Lord of the harvest will send out workers into his harvest.”

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

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

Proper 7 (June 19-25)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Jeremiah 20:7-13

You persuaded me, LORD, and I agreed to it.
You are stronger than I am, and you won out.
I have become a laughingstock all day long,
and everyone is mocking me.
⁸Whenever I speak, I cry out.
I cry out, “Violence and destruction!”
But the word of the LORD has brought scorn on me.
I am mocked all day long.
⁹If I say, “I will not mention him
or speak in his name anymore,”
then there is a burning fire in my heart,
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary of holding it in.
I cannot!
¹⁰I hear many whispering,
“Terror on every side!”
All my close friends,
those who are watching for my fall, say,
“Denounce him! Let’s denounce him.
Perhaps he can be pressured into making a mistake.
Then we will have the upper hand against him,
and we will take our revenge on him.”
¹¹But the LORD is with me like a terrifying warrior.
So my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not gain the upper hand.
They will be put to shame completely,
because they have not been successful.
Their eternal disgrace will never be forgotten.
¹²LORD of Armies, you test the righteous.
You see the heart and the mind.
Let me see your vengeance on them,
for I have laid out my case before you.
¹³Sing to the LORD!
Praise the LORD,
for he has delivered the life of the needy

from the hand of the wicked.

Second Reading

2 Timothy 4:1–8

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.

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.

Gospel

Matthew 10:5a, 21–33

⁵Jesus sent these twelve out and commanded them,

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

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

²⁶“So do not be afraid of them, because there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

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

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

Proper 8 (June 26-July 2)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Exodus 32:15–29

Moses turned and went down the mountain, with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand—tablets that were written on both sides, written on one side and on the other. ¹⁶The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, “There is the noise of war in the camp.”

¹⁸Moses said, “It is not the sound of people who shout for victory; neither is it the sound of people who cry because of defeat. But I do hear the sound of people who are celebrating.”

¹⁹As soon as Moses came near the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing, and Moses’ anger burned. So he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰He took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, and scattered it on the water. Then he made the people of Israel drink it.

²¹Moses said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you, that you have brought such a great sin on them?”

²²Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord burn. You know these people. They are set on evil, ²³so they said to me, ‘Make a god for us, who will go ahead of us, because this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ²⁴So I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, pull it off.’ So they gave it to me. I threw it into the fire and out came this calf.”

²⁵When Moses saw that the people were out of control (for Aaron had let them get so out of control that they were disgraced among their enemies), ²⁶Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, “Whoever is on the LORD’s side, come to me!”

All the descendants of Levi gathered themselves together to Moses. ²⁷He said to them, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says, ‘Every man is to strap his sword on his thigh and go back and forth throughout the camp, from one gate of the camp to the other, and every man is to kill his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.’ ” ²⁸The Levites did what Moses said, and that day about three thousand men from among the people fell. ²⁹Moses said, “Begin your service of the LORD today. Yes, because every man among you took a stand against his son and against his brother, the LORD is bestowing a blessing on you today.”

Second Reading

1 Timothy 6:11–16

But 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.

Gospel

Matthew 10:34–42

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

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

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

Proper 9 (July 3-9)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
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First Reading

Exodus 33:12–23

Moses said to the LORD, “Look, you yourself have been telling me, ‘Lead this people up,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ ¹³So now if I have found favor in your sight, please show me your ways, so that I may know you, so that I may find favor in your sight. Consider that this nation is your people.”

¹⁴The LORD said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

¹⁵Moses said to him, “If your Presence is not going to go with me, do not send us up from here. ¹⁶After all, how would people know that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Isn’t it in this way: that you go with us, so that we are distinguished, I and your people, from all the people who are on the face of the earth?”

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have said, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.”

¹⁸Then Moses said, “Please show me your glory.”

¹⁹The LORD said, “I will make all my goodness pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD in your presence. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.” ²⁰He said, “You cannot see my face, for no human may see me and live.”

²¹The LORD also said, “Look, there is a place next to me, where you shall stand on the rock. ²²It will happen that, while my glory passes by, I will put you in a crevice in the rock. I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back. But my face will not be seen.”

Second Reading

Romans 7:15–25a

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 11:25–30

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

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

Proper 10 (July 10-26)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 55:6–11

Seek the LORD while he may be found!

Call on him while he is near!

⁷Let the wicked man abandon his way.

Let an evil man abandon his thoughts.

Let him turn to the LORD,
and he will show him mercy.

Let him turn to our God,
because he will abundantly pardon.

⁸Certainly my plans are not your plans,
and your ways are not my ways, declares the LORD.

⁹Just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways,
and my plans are higher than your plans.

¹⁰Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky
and do not return there

unless they first water the earth, make it give birth, and cause it to sprout,
so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

¹¹in the same way my word that goes out from my mouth
will not return to me empty.

Rather, it will accomplish whatever I please,
and it will succeed in the purpose for which I sent it.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 3:5–11

What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? They are ministers through whom you believed, and each served as the Lord gave him his role. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷So then, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but it is God who causes the growth. ⁸The one who plants and the one who waters are united, and each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹For God is the one whom we serve as coworkers, and you are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰In keeping with the grace of God given to me, as a wise master builder, I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. But let each person be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹In fact, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Matthew 13:1–9, 18-23

That same day Jesus left the house and was sitting by the sea. ²A large crowd gathered around him. So he stepped into a boat and sat down, while all the people stood on the shore. ³He told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen, a sower went out to sow. ⁴As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. Immediately the seed sprang up, because the soil was not deep. ⁶But when the sun rose, the seed was scorched. Because it had no root, it withered away. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew up and choked it. ⁸But some seed fell on good ground and produced grain: some one hundred times, some sixty, and some thirty times more than was sown. ⁹Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.

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

Proper 11 (July 17-23)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 44:6–11

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

I am the first, and I am the last.

Except for me, there is no god.

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

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

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

⁸Do not tremble, and do not be frightened.

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

You are my witnesses.

Is there any god except me?

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

⁹All those who form an idol are good for nothing.

All the things which delight them provide no benefit.

As for their witnesses—they do not see.

They know nothing, so they will be ashamed.

¹⁰Who is this who forms a god or casts a metal image that can provide no profit? ¹¹Look at him!
All his associates will be ashamed. The craftsmen are merely men. Let them all gather themselves
and take a stand. They will be terrified and ashamed together.

Second Reading

Romans 1:18–25

Indeed, God's wrath is being revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and
unrighteousness of people who try to suppress the truth by unrighteousness. ¹⁹This happens because
what can be known about God is evident among them, because God made it evident among them.

²⁰In fact, his invisible characteristics—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen
since the creation of the world, because they are understood from the things he made. As a result,
people are without excuse, ²¹because, even though they knew God, they did not honor him or give
him thanks as God. Instead, their thinking became nonsense, and their senseless heart was darkened.

²²Although they claim to be wise, they have become fools ²³and exchanged the glory of the
immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human, or like birds, four-footed animals, and
crawling things. ²⁴So, as they followed the sinful desires of their hearts, God handed them over to the

impurity of degrading their own bodies among themselves. ²⁵Such people have traded the truth about God for the lie, worshipping and serving the creation rather than the Creator, who is worthy of praise forever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 13:24–30, 36-43

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

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

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

Proper 12 (July 24-30)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

1 Kings 3:5–12

The LORD appeared to Solomon in Gibeon in a dream at night.

God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

⁶Solomon said, “You have shown great mercy and faithfulness to your servant, my father David, just as he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart toward you. You have shown this great mercy and faithfulness to him and have given him a son who is seated on his throne to this very day. ⁷O LORD my God, now you have made your servant king in the place of my father David, but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And I, your servant, am among your people whom you have chosen, a great people, who cannot be counted or numbered because they are so many. ⁹Now give to your servant a perceptive heart to judge your people, to distinguish between good and evil, for who is able to judge this great people of yours?”

¹⁰In the eyes of the LORD, Solomon’s request was good. ¹¹So God said to him, “Because you have asked for this, and you have not asked for a long life, nor have you asked for riches, nor have you asked for the lives of your enemies, but you have asked for discernment to reach just verdicts, ¹²therefore I will act according to your words. Yes, I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you before you, nor will anyone like you rise up after you.

Second Reading

1 Timothy 6:17–21

Instruct 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.

²⁰O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, turning away from godless, empty talk and the contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge.” ²¹By professing it, some have veered away from the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 13:44–52

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

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

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

They answered him, “Yes.”

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

Proper 13 (July 31-August 6)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

1 Kings 17:1–6

Elijah from Tishbe, one of the settlers in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As surely as the LORD lives, the God of Israel before whom I stand, there will be no dew or rain during the coming years, except at my word.”

²Then the word of the LORD came to him: ³“Leave this place and turn east. Hide yourself by the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁴You will drink from the stream, and I will command the ravens to provide for you there.”

⁵So Elijah went and did just as the LORD had said. He lived in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁶The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and in the evening, and he drank from the stream.

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:3–8

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

⁴He did this when he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, so that we would be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ. He did this in accordance with the good purpose of his will, ⁶and for the praise of his glorious grace, which he has graciously given us in the one he loves.

⁷In him we also have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in keeping with the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished on us in all wisdom and insight.

Gospel

Matthew 14:13–21

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

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

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

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

¹⁸“Bring them here to me,” he replied. ¹⁹Then he instructed the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish. After looking up to heaven, he blessed them. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples. The disciples gave the food to the people. ²⁰They all ate and

were filled. They picked up twelve basketfuls of what was left over from the broken pieces. ²¹Those who ate were about five thousand men, not even counting women and children.

Proper 14 (August 7-13)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

1 Kings 19:9–18

He came to a cave and spent the night there.

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.”

Second Reading

Romans 8:28–39

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

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

³³Who will bring an accusation against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies! ³⁴Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, was raised to life, is the one who is at God’s right hand and who is also interceding for us! ³⁵What will separate us from the love of

Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶Just as it is written:

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

We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 14:22–33

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

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

²⁹Jesus said, “Come!”

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

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

Proper 15 (August 14-20)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

This is what the LORD says.

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

My righteousness is ready to be revealed.

⁶Then the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him and to love the name of the LORD
and to become his servants,
every one of them who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
those who take hold of my covenant—

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

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

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

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

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

Second Reading

Ephesians 2:13–22

But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace. He made the two groups one by destroying the wall of hostility that divided them ¹⁵when he abolished the law of commandments and regulations in his flesh. He did this to create in himself one new person out of the two, in this way making peace. ¹⁶And he did this to reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by putting the hostility to death on it. ¹⁷He also came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹So then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household. ²⁰You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the Cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you too are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Gospel

Matthew 15:21–28

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

²³But he did not answer her a word.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Proper 16 (August 21-27)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Exodus 34:5–9

The LORD came down in the cloud. He took his stand there with Moses and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶The LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed: “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, ⁷maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin. He will by no means clear the guilty. He calls their children and their children’s children to account for the guilt of the fathers, even to the third and the fourth generation.”

⁸Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshipped. ⁹He said, “If I have now found favor in your sight, Lord, please let the Lord go along with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our guilt and our sin, and accept us as your possession.”

Second Reading

Romans 10:5–13

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 16:13–20

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

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

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

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

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

Proper 17 (August 28-September 3)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Jeremiah 15:15-21

O LORD, you understand.

Remember me and care for me.

Take vengeance for me on those who persecute me.

You are slow to anger.

Do not take me away.

Keep in mind that for your sake I bear disgrace.

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

Your words became my joy,

the delight of my heart,

because I bear your name,

O LORD God of Armies.

¹⁷I did not sit with the band of partygoers,

nor did I celebrate with them.

I sat alone, because your hand was upon me.

You filled me with indignation.

¹⁸Why is my pain unending?

Why is my wound incurable, refusing to heal?

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

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

¹⁹Therefore this is what the LORD says.

If you repent, I will take you back,

so that you may stand before me.

If what you say is worthwhile and not worthless,

you will be my spokesman.

They must turn to you,

but you must not turn to them.

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

They will fight against you,

but they will not overcome you,

because I am with you to save you

and to rescue you, declares the LORD.

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

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

Second Reading

Romans 8:18–25

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 16:21–26

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

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

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

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵In fact whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶After all, what will it benefit a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul? Or what can a person give in exchange for his soul?”

Proper 18 (September 4-10)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Ezekiel 33:7–11

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

¹⁰So you, son of man, say the following to the house of Israel.

This is what you people are saying: “Certainly our rebellion and our sins weigh us down, and because of them we are rotting away. How then can we live?” ¹¹Say to them, “As I live, declares the LORD God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?”

Second Reading

Galatians 2:11–16

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly wrong. ¹²For before some people came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when those people came, he drew back and separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision group. ¹³And the rest of the Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that they were not acting according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of all of them, “If you, a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, why do you compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?”

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.

Gospel

Matthew 18:15–20

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his sin just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. ¹⁶But if he will not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And, if he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as an unbeliever or a tax collector. ¹⁸Amen I tell you: Whatever you bind on earth will be

bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Amen I tell you again: If two of you on earth agree to ask for anything, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. ²⁰In fact where two or three have gathered together in my name, there I am among them.”

Proper 19 (September 11-17)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®

First Reading

Genesis 50:15–21

When 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.

Second Reading

Ephesians 4:29–5:2

Do not let any unwholesome talk come from your mouths. Say only what is beneficial when there is a need to build up others, so that it will be a blessing to those who hear. ³⁰Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of every kind of bitterness, rage, anger, quarreling, and slander, along with every kind of malice. ³²Instead, be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven us.

^{5:1}Therefore, be imitators of God as his dearly loved children. ²And walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Gospel

Matthew 18:21–35

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Proper 20 (September 18-24)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Jonah 3:10–4:11

When God saw their actions, that they had turned from their evil way, God relented from the disaster which he said he would bring on them, and he did not carry it out.

⁴But to Jonah all this seemed very bad, and he became very angry. ²He prayed to the LORD, “LORD, wasn’t this exactly what I said when I was still in my own country? That is why I previously fled to Tarshish, because I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abounding in mercy, and you relent from sending disaster. ³So now, LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

⁴But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

⁵Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city. He made a shelter for himself there and sat in the shade under it, waiting to see what would happen in the city.

⁶Then the LORD God provided a plant and made it grow up over Jonah to provide shade over his head, to relieve him from his discomfort. So Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, and it attacked the plant so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, so he said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?” Jonah said, “I do have a right to be angry—angry enough to die!”

¹⁰So the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this plant. You did not work for it or make it grow. It grew up in one night and perished after one night. ¹¹So should I not be concerned for Nineveh, the great city, in which there are more than one hundred twenty thousand people who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left—and also many animals?”

Second Reading

Romans 9:6–16

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

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

¹⁴What will we say then? Does this mean that God is unjust? Absolutely not! ¹⁵For God says to Moses:

I will show mercy to whom I show mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.

¹⁶So then, it does not depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Gospel

Matthew 20:1–16

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

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

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

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

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

Proper 21 (September 25-October 1)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the LORD came to me.

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

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

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

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

Second Reading

Philippians 2:1–11

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

⁵Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. ⁶Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, ⁷but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

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

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

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

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

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

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

They said to him, “The first.”

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

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

Proper 22 (October 2-8)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 5:1-7

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

My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile ridge.

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

He planted it with the best vines.

He built a tower in the middle of it.

He also cut a winepress into it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁶I will make it a wasteland.

It will not be pruned or hoed.

So briars and thorns will shoot up.

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

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

He expected justice, but instead there was oppression.

He expected righteousness, but there was an outcry.

Second Reading

Philippians 3:12-21

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus also took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it yet, but there is one thing I do: Forgetting the things that are behind and straining toward the things that are ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵Therefore, let all of us who are mature continue to think this way. And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this to you too. ¹⁶Only let us think the same thing and walk in line with what we already have attained.

¹⁷Brothers, join together in imitating me and in paying attention to those who are walking according to the pattern we gave you. ¹⁸To be sure, many walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. I told you about them often, and now I am saying it while weeping. ¹⁹Their end is destruction, their god is their appetite, and their glory is in their shame. They are thinking only about earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven. We are eagerly waiting for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹By the power that enables him to subject all things to himself, he will transform our humble bodies to be like his glorious body.

Gospel

Matthew 21:33–46

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

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

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

The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

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

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

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

Proper 23 (October 9-15)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 25:6-9

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

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

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

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

Second Reading

Romans 1:16–17

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

Gospel

Matthew 22:1–14

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

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

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

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

Proper 24 (October 16-22)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Daniel 1:3–21

The king told Ashpenaz, the chief of his court officials, to bring some young Israelite men from the royal family or from the nobility. ⁴He was to choose young men who had no blemish, who were good looking, who had insight into all kinds of wisdom, who possessed knowledge, understanding, and learning, and who were capable of serving in the king's palace, in order to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵The king assigned them daily rations from the special royal food and from the king's own wine. He ordered that they should be trained for three years. At the end of training they were to serve the king. ⁶In this group of young men were the Judeans Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷The chief of the officials gave them new names. He gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar, Hananiah the name Shadrak, Mishael the name Meshak, and Azariah the name Abednego.

⁸Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the special food of the king or with the wine that he drank. So he sought permission from the chief official, so that he would not have to defile himself. ⁹God made the chief of the officials favorable and sympathetic toward Daniel. ¹⁰Then the chief of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink. Why should he see your faces looking less healthy than those of the other young men who are your age? You put my life at risk before the king."

¹¹Daniel said to the superintendent whom the chief of the officials had placed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²"Please test your servants for ten days. Tell them to give us only vegetables, and we will eat them and drink water. ¹³Observe our appearance and the appearance of the young men who eat the special royal food. Then deal with your servants based on what you see." ¹⁴So he listened to what they said about this and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵At the end of ten days, their appearance was noticeably better than that of the others. They were healthier than any of the young men who had been eating the special royal food. ¹⁶So the superintendent permanently took away the special royal food and the wine they were to drink and gave them only vegetables. ¹⁷As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and insight into all kinds of literature, as well as wisdom. In addition, Daniel also understood every kind of vision and dream.

¹⁸At the end of the time which the king had set for them to be brought to him, the chief of the officials brought them before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹The king spoke with them, and none of the others were found to be comparable to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they served the king. ²⁰In every matter concerning wisdom and understanding that the king sought from them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and spell casters in his entire kingdom. ²¹So Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Second Reading

Romans 13:1–7

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

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 22:15–22

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

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

They brought him a denarius.

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

²¹"Caesar's," they replied to him.

Then he said to them, "Therefore give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

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

Proper 25 (October 23-29)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Genesis 4:1–16

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.

¹⁶Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Second Reading

2 John 1–6

The Elder,

To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth—not only I, but also everyone who knows the truth—²because of the truth that remains in us and will be with us forever:

³Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, in truth and love.

⁴I was overjoyed to find out that some of your children are walking in the truth, in keeping with the command we received from the Father. ⁵And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing a new command to you, but the one we have had from the beginning—let us love one

another. ⁶And this is love: that we walk according to his commands. This is the command: Just as you have heard from the beginning, keep on walking in it.

Gospel

Matthew 22:34–46

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

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

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

They said to him, “The Son of David.”

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

⁴⁴The Lord said to my Lord,
‘Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies
under your feet’?

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

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

Proper 26 (October 30-November 5)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Reading

Micah 3:5-12

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 2:1-13

Indeed, brothers, you yourselves know that our visit to you was not a waste of time. ²Even though we had suffered previously and were treated shamefully in Philippi (as you know), we were bold in our God to speak the gospel of God to you in the face of great opposition. ³For our appeal does not come from error or impure motives, or by way of deceit. ⁴Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please people but God, who examines our

hearts. ⁵Indeed, as you know, we never at any time used flattering speech, nor did we act with greed as a motive. God is our witness. ⁶Also, we did not seek the praise of people (neither yours nor anyone else's), ⁷even though we could have been a burden as Christ's apostles. On the contrary, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. ⁸We yearned for you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

⁹Surely, brothers, you remember our labor and hardship! We worked night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you, while we preached the gospel of God to you. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, of how devout, righteous, and blameless we were toward you who believe. ¹¹In the same way, you know that we treated each of you as a father deals with his own children: ¹²encouraging, comforting, and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who is calling you into his kingdom and glory.

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

Gospel

Matthew 23:1–12

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

Proper 27 (November 6-12)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 52:1–6

Wake, awake!

Clothe yourself with strength, O Zion.

Put on your beautiful garments,

Jerusalem, you holy city,

for never again will the uncircumcised

and the unclean enter you.

²Shake off the dust.

Get up and take your seat, Jerusalem.

Loosen the chains from your neck,

you captive daughter of Zion.

³Yes, this is what the LORD says.

You were sold for nothing,

and you will be redeemed without money.

⁴Yes, this is what the LORD God says.

In the beginning, my people went down to Egypt to stay there for a while.

Later Assyria oppressed them without cause.

⁵Now what do I have here? declares the LORD.

Indeed, my people have been taken away for nothing.

Their rulers howl with mockery, declares the LORD.

My name is continually despised all day.

⁶Therefore my people will know my name.

So on that day they will know that I am the one—

the one who is saying, “Here I am!”

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

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

⁷To be sure, those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of

salvation as a helmet. ⁹You see, God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are also doing.

Gospel

Matthew 25:1–13

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

Proper 28 (November 13-19)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 1:10–18

Hear 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.

Second Reading

Romans 12:1–8

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

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 25:14–30

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Last Sunday of the Church Year (November 20-26)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year A
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14

I continued to watch until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days was seated. His clothing was white as snow, and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne was flames of fire. Its wheels were blazing fire. ¹⁰A river of fire flowed out from his presence. Thousands upon thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and books were opened.

¹³I kept watching the night visions, and there, in the clouds of heaven, I saw one like a son of man coming. He came to the Ancient of Days, and he was brought before him. ¹⁴To him was given dominion, honor, and a kingdom. All peoples, nations, and languages will worship him. His dominion is an eternal dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

Or

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24

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.

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.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you do not grieve in the same way as the others, who have no hope. ¹⁴Indeed, if we believe that Jesus

died and rose again, then in the same way we also believe that God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.

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

Or

1 Corinthians 15:20–28

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

Gospel

Matthew 25:31–46

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

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

⁴⁰"The King will answer them, 'Amen I tell you: Just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.'

⁴¹"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you did not give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you did not give me anything to drink. ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not

welcome me, lacking clothes and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not take care of me.'

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

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

Or

Matthew 27:27–31

Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. ²⁹They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head.

³¹After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Reformation Day

(October 31 or the Last Sunday in October)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year C
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Reading

Daniel 6:10–12, 16–23

Now, when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. It had windows on its upper story that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day he would get on his knees and pray and offer praise before his God. He continued to do that, just as he had been doing before this. ¹¹Then these men came as a group and found Daniel praying and seeking favor from his God.

¹²They then went and asked the king about the decree. “Your Majesty, did you not sign a decree that anyone who prays to any god or person for thirty days except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the den of lions?”

The king answered, “Indeed I did. The order is established as a law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be revoked.”

¹⁶Then the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you.” ¹⁷A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the pit. The king sealed it with his signet ring and the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel’s situation. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace. He spent the night without food, and no entertainment was brought before him. But he could not sleep.

¹⁹At dawn the king arose as soon as it was light and hurried to the lions’ den. ²⁰As he came near the pit, he cried out in a fearful voice. The king said to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God, whom you serve continually, able to rescue you from the lions?”

²¹Then Daniel spoke with the king. “Your Majesty, may you live forever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions. They have not hurt me because he found me innocent in his presence. Also before you, Your Majesty, I have committed no crime.”

²³Then the king was very glad and said that Daniel should be brought up from the pit. So Daniel was brought up from the pit, and he was unharmed because he trusted in his God.

Second Reading

Romans 3:19–28

Now we know that whatever the law says is addressed to those who are under the law, so that every mouth will be silenced and the whole world will be subject to God’s judgment. ²⁰For this reason, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by works of the law, for through the law we become aware of sin.

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

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

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

Gospel

Matthew 10:16–23

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

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

All Saints' Day

(November 1 or the First Sunday in November)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year C
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Reading

Revelation 7:9–17

After these things I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing in front of the throne and of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They called out with a loud voice and said:

Salvation comes from our God, who sits on the throne, and from the Lamb.

¹¹All the angels stood around the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures. They fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, ¹²saying:

Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and might belong to our God forever and ever. Amen.

¹³One of the elders spoke to me and said, “These people dressed in white robes, who are they and where did they come from?”

And I answered him, “Sir, you know.”

¹⁴And he said to me:

These are the ones who are coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵Because of this they are in front of the throne of God,
and they serve him day and night in his temple.

He who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

¹⁶They will never be hungry or thirsty ever again.

The sun will never beat upon them, nor will any scorching heat,

¹⁷for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd.

He will lead them to springs of living water.

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Second Reading

1 John 3:1–3

See the kind of love the Father has given us that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are! The world does not know us, because it did not know him. ²Dear friends, we are children of God now, but what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he is revealed we will be like him, and we will see him as he really is. ³Everyone who has this hope purifies himself just as Jesus is pure.

Gospel

Matthew 5:1–12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up onto a mountain. When he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²He opened his mouth and began to teach them. He said these things:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
because theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn,
because they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the gentle,
because they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
because they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful,
because they will receive mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart,
because they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers,
because they will be called sons of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
because theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven. In fact, that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”