

**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Psalm 93:5, 2, 1, 3-4**

Your testimonies are | very sure;\*  
holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, for- | ever.  
Your throne is established | from of old;\*  
You are from ever- | lasting.  
The Lord reigns, He is clothed with | majesty;\*  
The Lord is | clothed with strength.  
Surely the world is es- | tablished,\*  
so that it can- | not be moved.  
The floods have lifted | up their voice;\*  
the floods lift | up their waves.  
The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many | waters,\*  
than the mighty waves | of the sea.

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Psalm 121:1-2**

“From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.”

**7** READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O heavenly Father, as You gladden our hearts again to celebrate the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, mercifully bestow on us the joy to receive Him as our Redeemer and so welcome Him when He comes again to be our judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**9** PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

**10** SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK  
**To Shepherds as They Watched by Night**

TLH 103  
Martin Luther



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. To shepherds as they watched by night<br>Appeared a host of angels bright;<br>Behold the tender Babe, they said,<br>In yonder lowly manger laid. | 4. What harm can sin and death then do?<br>The true God now abides with you.<br>Let hell and Satan rage and chafe,<br>Christ is your Brother--ye are safe. |
| 2. At Bethlehem, in David's town,<br>As Micah did of old make known;<br>'Tis Jesus Christ, your Lord and King,<br>Who doth to all salvation bring.  | 6. Ye shall and must at last prevail;<br>God's own ye are, ye cannot fail.<br>To God forever sing your praise<br>With joy and patience all your days.      |



**“The Birth of the Christ-Child”**

**1** BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:  
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**2** SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED  
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our  
Lord, who was conceived by the Holy  
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered  
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died  
and was buried. He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the  
dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at  
the right hand of God, the Father  
Almighty. From thence He will come to  
judge the living and the dead.

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

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

**4** PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

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

*Evening.* I thank you, my  
heavenly Father, through Jesus  
Christ, Your dear Son, that You  
have graciously kept me this day;  
and I pray that You would forgive  
me all my sins where I have done  
wrong, and graciously keep me this  
night. For into Your hands, I  
commend myself, my body and  
soul, and all things. Let Your holy  
angel be with me, that the evil foe  
may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: **The Birth of the Christ-Child**

Led by a special star, wise men came from the East in search of the Christ-Child, the newborn king of the Jews. With a bearing from the Word of God, they found the baby Jesus and they worshipped Him. Have you ever wondered why? What made this Child worthy of worship? Contrary to the depictions of our Christmas cards, the Christ-Child had no halo, aura, or special glow. "He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isaiah 53:2). With eyes opened by God's Spirit, we recognize this Child as the Son of God, our Savior, and we join the shepherds and wise men in worshipping Him.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 2:33-40 "A Sign that is opposed"**

Simeon's prophetic words to Mary concerning the Christ Child force us to move on from the image of a cooing newborn that we might now contemplate the gravity of His coming. The preaching, teaching, and workings of Jesus will be opposed because they are not in line with what is expected. Christ will be a stumbling block. His message will cause division, cut to the quick, and pierce souls, revealing the thoughts of many hearts. This pain and suffering, however, is necessary, for it prepares us to receive the redemption that is found only in the Christ Child. *Lord, may my soul be pierced through by the Word of Your Son, that I might abandon my expectations of You and embrace the redemption found only in Your Son, Jesus Christ, my Savior. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 121 "From where does my help come?"**

"My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth." My help comes from the Child who was born of the Virgin Mary. My help comes from the One Who shows me the way to the Father. My help comes from the One Who was crucified, died, and was buried with the weight of my sin. My help comes from the One Who was raised from the dead and now sits at the right hand of God. Though I might feel frightened or burdened by the ways and workings of the world, the Lord is my keeper. When I doubt the reality of the Lord's care for me, I am encouraged by the psalmist to lift up my eyes and focus on the majestic love of my Lord demonstrated through His Son, Jesus Christ. *Father, preserve me in Your loving embrace from this time forth and evermore. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **Galatians 4:1-7 "God sent forth His Son"**

Since the Fall of man, all are born enslaved to the weak and worthless ways of this world. Our Father in heaven, out of His great love, has provided a way to freedom. "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive adoption as sons." God has had compassion upon you and has chosen to make you an heir of His kingdom. Baptized into His name, you have received the redemption won by His Son, Jesus Christ. Chosen by the Father, joined to the Son, you are adopted, an official member of the family, an heir through God. *Heavenly Father, may the Spirit of Your Son ever be in my heart that I may approach You as an adopted heir to Your kingdom with all boldness and confidence. Amen.*

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WED

SCRIPTURE: **Isaiah 11:1-5 "A shoot from the stump of Jesse"**

The "stump of Jesse" is the line and lineage of David. From the ruins of the earthly kingdom of David, a spiritual kingdom will rise up. While Herod was ruling as king, Christ the Savior was born. Luther comments, "From a trunk nearly decayed a little twig will emerge and grow up and make holy, and it will not be prevented by heat or by rain or by all the powers of the air." In this new spiritual kingdom, things work quite differently. The people do not come together and appoint a king; instead, the King comes first and gathers a people unto Himself. From the hopeless stump, our eternal Hope springs forth. *Holy Father, we thank You for You have made us holy through the shoot from the stump of Jesse, subjects of the Kingdom of Your Son. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 2:22-32 "The consolation of Israel"**

Simeon faithfully waited and then the day came, the day the prophet Isaiah foretold: "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us." The babe in the arms of Mary is the consolation of Israel, the promised Messiah of God, and the Way of salvation. The Christ Child is not only the glory of the people of Israel, the shoot raised from the stump of Jesse, but also a light for revelation to the Gentiles. That is, He is the hope of all people, the Savior of the world. We praise God, along with Simeon, that He has sent unto us His Son, that we might know peace and salvation, that our troubled souls might be consoled and quieted. *Lord, may the light of Your Son ever be upon us that we may be kept in Your salvation and peace. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Hebrews 2:9-16 "The Founder of salvation"**

The Son of God humbled Himself for our salvation. Born of the Virgin Mary, He was made lower than the angels for a little while. Jesus took on our flesh and blood that He might suffer and die for all. In His suffering and death, Jesus was crowned with glory and honor. By the grace of God, in Jesus' suffering and death on the cross He tasted death for everyone. Baptized into His death and resurrection, we are made holy. Jesus is the founder of our salvation. We are made perfect through His perfect sacrifice. The Father adopts us through Jesus. Jesus is not ashamed to call those for whom He died His brothers. *Father, we give You thanks for the privilege to call upon You as Father through the merits of Your Son, our brother, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Matthew 2:1-12 "Where is He?"**

The Christ Child, born king of the Jews, makes Himself known to the world. His birth was first announced to lowly shepherds in Bethlehem's hills by the angelic heralds. This heavenly proclamation was spread by all who heard. The arrival of this new King was also announced to the greater world by means of a special star, for by it, a group of outsiders, wise men, were led to the very source of wisdom, first to the Word of God and then by way of the Word to the Word made flesh. In the presence of the Christ Child, these men bowed down and worshipped the author of wisdom. *Father, by the power of Your Spirit, working through Your Word, we pray that You might graciously continue to draw all people to Your Son, the source of salvation. Amen.*

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