PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 107:28-29, 1, 8, 24-25
They cry out to the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses. He calms the storm, so that its waves are still. Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! They see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He commands the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves of the sea.

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

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.

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.

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.
THEM OF THE WEEK: God Manifested in the Power of Jesus over Nature

We are often tempted to believe that we are in control of our own lives. If we behave in a certain way, follow a certain diet and exercise routine, and make “right” choices, our lives will unfold according to our desires and everything will be ok. When our eyes are opened and we realize that we are actually not in control of anything, we are often filled with stress, anxiety, and even despair. With eyes of faith, we are blessed to see that it is actually the Lord who reigns. His reign over the earth is shown to us in the work and life of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to accomplish what we cannot. By His life, death, and glorious resurrection, we are freed. In faith, we trust in His reign and we rejoice in the reality that all things are in His hands.

**THU**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 8:23-27: “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey Him?”

When the forces of nature rise up and test your faith, where do you turn? The disciples turned to their Lord, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” The One who slept, the example of faith, arose. This Lord is much more than example. He rebukes the wind and the waves. The sea obeys and the frothy waves become a great calm. “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey Him?” He is also the object of faith. “You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” Jesus accomplishes what we cannot. No matter how great the storm, the salvation of the Lord is ours. He serves to the glory of His Father for the benefit of His people. Under the curse of Adam, it is our nature to rebel against God. “The nations rage and the peoples plot against God.” The kings and rulers take counsel against the Lord. God is not welcome in the “real world.” He is pushed to the periphery, banned from the conversation, even denied. God laughs at this foolishness (v.4), God warns (v.10), and God loves (v. 12). He sends His only begotten Son to rule over the nations. Our nature cannot overthrow the true King. This is the only King that has the authority to deliver us from our bondage to sin. His nature is pure. He serves to the glory of His Father for the benefit of His people. *Heavenly Father, humble us that we may serve the true King, and take refuge in Him, even Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 4:16-25: “In hope [Abraham] believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations.”

Abraham received the promise from God that he would be a father of many nations when he was one hundred and his wife, Sarah, was ninety. The thought of natural parenthood was practically unimaginable. Hearing the promise of God, Abraham believed and hoped against hope. It is the Lord who calls into existence the things that do not exist. He is the Creator. It is also the Lord Who gives life, Who breathes life into the dust of the earth, Who gives a son to the elderly Abraham and Sarah, as promised. *Heavenly Father, You granted Abraham the faith to set aside his reason and family use. Questions? Please email bryan@aroundthewordjournal.com. Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Thank you to St. John’s Lutheran Church, makers of the Collects and Hymns. This week’s author is Rev. Matthew Rasmussen, pastor of Community Lutheran Church, in South Burlington, Vermont. He and his wife, Adrienne, are blessed to have been given two daughters, Makenna and Chloe.*

**SAT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 97: “The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!”

The reign of the Lord is universal. His reign extends to even the remote “coastlands” of the earth. Nothing and no one can stand against the Lord. Even the mountains, which we think of as permanent and unmovable, will melt away before Him. “All the peoples see His glory.” In Jesus Christ, the power of God, the love of God, and the glory of God is made known to the world. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the lives of His saints are preserved, and they are delivered from the hand of the wicked. Psalm 97 illustrates this glorious reality which we will behold, with our own eyes, on the Day of the Resurrection. *Lord, God, defend us, Your saints, from the temptation to follow false gods that we may rejoice in You and behold Your glory. Amen.*

**WED**

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 43:1-3: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.”

The Lord, the One who created and formed Israel, also delivered His people from the clutches of Pharaoh’s pursuing army. The Lord parted the Red Sea and Israel crossed in safety. Later, the Lord interrupted the flow of the Jordan River, allowing His people to cross on dry ground and enter into the Promised Land. Still today, the Lord provides a path of deliverance for His people through water and Word. In your baptism, you were called by name; you were redeemed; you were delivered from the clutches of the evil foe and into the kingdom of God. *Dear heavenly Father, thank You for destroying the obstacles that separate us from You and for delivering us into the safety of Your kingdom through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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