I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up,*
And the train of His robe filled the temple.
And I heard the voice of a great multitude, saying,*
“Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!
Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!*
Serve the Lord with gladness;
Know that the Lord, He is God:*
it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
enter into His gates with thanks giving,*
and into His courts with praise.
For the Lord is good: His mercy is everlasting,*
and His truth endures to all generations.

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 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 night; 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:** God Manifested in the Youth of Jesus

We know very little of the youth of Jesus. St. Luke spends a lot of time on the birth narrative but skips right over all of His youth except for one event that happened when Jesus was twelve. It is worthwhile to ponder that, connected to the Nativity of Jesus we know that Jesus became human and lived all aspects of humanity, even childhood. How easy is it for children and teens to feel disconnected from Jesus when they don’t think about Jesus ever being the same age as them. Yes, Jesus knows all aspects of humanity and came to redeem all nations, from the littlest to the oldest.

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**MON**

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 2:41-52 Lost and Found

I remember being lost in a store when I was a child. The fear caused my heart to race. I looked for my family, those familiar faces that would mean I’m where I’m supposed to be. I then lived the flip side when one of our children hid in a clothes rack and we lost him in a store. We can become lost, and even more so, we can lose our way in life. We wander on the wrong paths: paths of injustice and iniquity. Jesus never lost His way and He seeks out and saves the lost. The Good Shepherd cries out to His sheep and we know the voice of our Savior. You are found by God and put into the family of your church. Jesus, thank You for finding me and opening my ears to hear Your voice calling. Amen.

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**TUE**

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 12:1-5 Transformed by the Grace of God

A parent would like to conform their children to be exactly like they intend. A parent attempts to model the behavior and attitude that they want their child to have. They are trying to conform their child to themselves. Instead of conforming children to the world, children, along with adults, are transformed by the will and Word of God. God doesn’t try to conform us to Himself but rather does a more radical thing. He transforms us. He changes our substance. United by faith in him we have union with Him and are transformed to be like Him. This in turn changes our behavior to be holy and acceptable. Spirit, by Your working, transform me to be holy as You are holy. Amen.

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**WED**

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 61:1-3 Waiting for the Lord

Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One, during His entire earthly life. Even as a young boy He is the anointed, but He is not yet prepared to “proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” What are you waiting for? Are you waiting for a certain birthday, something at work, or school? Just as Jesus waited for the right time, and the people of old waited for the coming Messiah, we are called upon to wait. We have the preaching and teaching of Jesus now. We have His life and death through Baptism now. Yet we wait for His will to be accomplished in our lives and His Second Coming. We wait with God-given patience. Lord Messiah, give me the patience of Your people of old. Amen.

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**THU**

**SCRIPTURE:** Mark 10:13-16 Child-like Faith

An infant trusts that mother and father will care for him. Simple trust doesn’t worry about “what if’s.” The little child that Jesus calls us to be doesn’t mean we are to regress to childhood but rather we are to have that simple faith. The more we study God’s Word and grow in faith the more we learn of our total dependency upon the Lord. We are completely dependent upon God for all we have in this life and for all of the benefits of eternal life. We passively, like a child, receive all the care, protection, and love that our heavenly Father bestows upon us. Abba, Father; give me child-like faith that trusts in You wholly. Amen.

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**FRI**

**SCRIPTURE:** Ephesians 6:1-4 Children and Parents

One of the universal feelings of just about any parent is guilt. Parents think about what they should have done differently and how they would change things in the past. One of the universal feelings of just about any child is exasperation. Every time they hear “no” they get frustrated about one more thing they don’t get or can’t do. For parents, the answer to this is to raise children “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The Christian faith takes away guilt because all sin is erased in Jesus. For children, the answer is the same. A child’s faith in God shows them that their parents are doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Lord God, keep me faithful to Your Word all of my days. Amen.

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**SAT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 86 Taught the Way of the Lord

Thomas said to Jesus, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” The way of the Lord must be taught to you. You might naturally think the Christian life is taught to you by parents, teachers, or pastors. However, those are only tools in the belt of the Lord. The Lord teaches you His ways so that you may walk in the way of truth. As you listen to the Word of God you are taught of your sinful condition, the salvation you have in Jesus Christ, and the way of holiness. By the work of the Holy Spirit, your ears are open to the teaching of the Lord. Holy Spirit, teach me Your ways that I may walk in Your truth. Amen.

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**SUN**

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 13 How long, O LORD?

Life doesn’t always go right, does it? Things don’t go according to your good plan and you find yourself frustrated by people, yourself, or the situation. It can seem as if life is lined up against you. David wonders how long he will be forgotten by God. David sees his enemies prevailing against him. However, he knows that the steadfast love of God never fails. Even in the midst of depression and despair the joy of salvation is knowing that your Savior rescues you from the pit of destruction and deals bountifully with you. Heavenly Father, Your steadfast love never ceases so cause me to rejoice in Your salvation. Amen.

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