



**5** PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Isaiah 35:10; Psalm 39:4-5, 7-8**  
 The ransomed of the Lord / shall return,\*  
 and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy / on their heads.  
 They shall obtain joy and / gladness,\*  
 and sorrow and sighing shall / flee away.  
 Lord, make me to know my end, and what is the measure / of my days,\*  
 that I may know how / frail I am.  
 You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing be- / fore You;\*  
 certainly every man at his best state is but / vapor.  
 And now, Lord, what do I / wait for?\*

**6** SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Matthew 25:13**  
 “Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

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

**8** PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK  
 Absolve, we implore You, O Lord, Your people from their offenses, that from the bonds of our sins which by reason of our frailty we have brought upon us we may be delivered by Your bountiful goodness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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  
**Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying** TLH 609, LSB 516  
 Philipp Nicolai



1. "Wake, awake, for night is flying."  
 The watchmen on the heights are cry-  
 ing; "Awake, Jerusalem, arise!"  
 Midnight hears the welcome voices  
 And at the thrilling cry rejoices:  
 "Oh, where are ye, ye virgins wise?  
 The Bridegroom comes, awake!  
 Your lamps with gladness take!  
 Hallelujah!  
 With bridal care Yourselves prepare  
 To meet the Bridegroom, who is near."

3. Now let all the heav'ns adore Thee,  
 Let men and angels sing before Thee,  
 With harp and cymbal's clearest tone.  
 Of one pearl each shining portal,  
 Where, dwelling with the choir  
 immortal,  
 We gather round Thy radiant throne.  
 No vision ever brought,  
 No ear hath ever caught,  
 Such great glory;  
 Therefore will we Eternally  
 Sing hymns of praise and joy to Thee.

**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 Second Coming of Christ

The last week of the church year focuses on the second coming of Christ, our heavenly Bridegroom (Matthew 25). He has removed our sins from us (Psalm 103), made us rich toward God (Luke 12), become our light and salvation (Psalm 27), made all things new (Isaiah 65, Revelation 21), and bid us to keep watch as children of the light (I Thessalonians 5). And yet, as the church “resets” with Advent I, the gifts are as old as our unchanging God, yet as young as tomorrow. “Oh, joy to know that Thou, my Friend, Art Lord, Beginning without end, The First and Last, Eternal! And Thou at length...Wilt take me to that holy place, The home of joys supernal” (TLH 343.7).

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:1-13 The Bridegroom Comes, Awake!

In this vivid and sobering portrait of Jesus’ second coming, the foolish virgins remind us of life apart from baptismal grace, where there is but spiritual darkness and eternal death. The wise virgins, however, are an image of those who believe and are baptized, for oil is traditionally associated with Baptism. Their lamps burn brightly, for the Word of God is a lamp to their feet and a light to their path (Psalm 119:105). Above all, Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, comes at an hour unknown. The baptized keep watch in daily repentance, faith, and holy living, for they know neither the day nor the hour. “Now come, Thou Blessed One, Lord Jesus, God’s own Son, Hail! Hosanna! The joyful call we answer all and follow to the nuptial hall.” (TLH 606.7) Amen.

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 103 As far as the East is from the West

See in this Psalm how the Lord in His goodness has removed our sins from us “as far as the east is from the west” (v. 12). If you fly due north, for instance, you will eventually cross the North Pole and be going south and then north again, effectively in circles. But travel east or west and you are always going one exclusive direction. See how the East is as far from the West as two directions can possibly be from one another! “This all comes to pass in Christ, Who for this reason was promised and now is come, whose kingdom reigns over all” (Luther) has removed our sins from us by His own blood. *Father in heaven, as the east and the west can never meet, so remove our sins far from us, that they can be counted against us no more. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Children of the Light

The “light vs. dark” theme runs throughout the Scriptures, from creation to the end of days. The children of the darkness sleep at night, get drunk at night, proclaim ‘peace’ when there is no peace, and are unprepared for the second coming – all reminders of the darkness of the sin into which we were born and to which we have added daily. But through holy Baptism, historically often done at sunrise on Easter Sunday, we are children of the day. As children of the day, we keep awake in the daily repentance and faith, wear the armor of God, and watch and pray daily for the Lord to come and claim us as His own. *Absolve us, O Lord, from our offenses, that we may encourage one another with the good news of salvation in Your Son. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 65:17-19 The New Jerusalem

See how Jerusalem is old and how it is new. The thundering prophet Isaiah preached to old Jerusalem as she was about to be carried away into Babylonian captivity. Apart from repentance, captivity would come, recalling her previous “captivity” in the wilderness. This stark word of Law calls all men to repent of the idols daily manufactured in the vanity of her heart. But in the new Jerusalem, the church, is the “sweet and blessed country, the home of God’s elect!” Here the former ways are forgotten (forgiveness), the churchly city is a joy to her people, and the Lord rejoices over her, for Christ is in her midst. “*Jesus, in mercy bring us to that dear land of rest, Who art, with God the Father and Spirit ever blest. Amen.*” (TLH 613.4)

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 12:13-21 Rich Toward God

In Haiti, a Christian missionary recorded the following prayer: “Father, they say we are the poorest country in the world. Thank You, Father. May we also be poor in spirit, that we may inherit the Kingdom of God.” See how the word of the cross scatters the proud and exalts the lowly! Do not speak sweetly to your own soul, dearly Beloved, for then you will forget the depth of sin and death that lies therein. Rather, lift up your soul to God in contrition and humility, that He may speak sweetly to it the words of forgiveness, life and salvation. *Father, they say we are the richest country in the world. Have mercy, Father! And make us poor in spirit through daily repentance that we may be rich toward You, with all the treasures of heaven. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 21:1-7 A New Heaven and Earth

The first and last two chapters of the Bible describe God’s perfect creation -- a paradisaical union between God and man. Everything in between these chapters is the story of God restoring His creation in Christ. Behold! The new creation in Revelation 21—22, and how once again we can say, “It was very good” (Genesis 1:31). The old order of death has passed away. The new creation has come, as a bride adorned for her husband. In this new creation, Christ dwells with us and wipes every tear from our eyes. He is our God and in Christ alone we are His people—ransomed, healed, restored, and forgiven. “*O Christ, do Thou my soul prepare / For that bright home of love / That I may see Thee and adore / With all the saints above*” (TLH 618.6). Amen.

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 27 Our Light and Our Salvation

Psalm 27:1 describes God’s work of light and salvation. God’s first words were, “Let there be light,” and light has been conquering the darkness ever since. For what is salvation but God’s act of scattering the darkness in Christ? The same all-powerful Word that spoke light into darkness became flesh to scatter the darkness (Christmas). Jesus was declared to be the only-begotten Son of God (Epiphany), conquered the spiritual darkness in the wilderness (Lent), and gave all that we might have all (Holy Week). His resurrection gives us a down payment on our own resurrection, for which we now wait in penitent faith. “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon’” (Rev 22:20). *E’en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come! Amen.*

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