

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 111:2**
"Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them."

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



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



"The Christ-Child in the Temple"

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 Christ-Child in the Temple**

The parents of the Christ-child brought Him to the Temple to fulfill the things of the Law. Even right there, as a forty day old infant, Jesus fulfills the things of the Law. As Mary brought two turtledoves to the Temple for her purification, she also brought a Lamb. The Lamb would not be sacrificed that day, but He was already well on His way to the sacrificial altar of the cross. It was this sacrificial Lamb that Anna sang of. It was this infant, Jesus, whom Simeon took up in His arms, finally seeing the Lord's Christ. And it is this Jesus that we receive this very day as well. The fulfillment of the Law, the sacrifice and the priest, the Supper and the host, this is Jesus whom we praise, for He has come to fulfill the Law for us and save us from our sins.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 2:33-40—The Fall and Rising of Many**

Jesus is the source of the fall and rising of many. He comes to do the things of salvation that seem so very backwards to the world. In fact, our sinful flesh hates the salvation of our Lord: hates the cross, hates the forgiveness, hates the righteousness of Christ. And yet Jesus came to fulfill the Law that we could not; even if we desperately try and hold onto it. Even as a little baby, He is brought into the Temple as the Lamb of God that will one day be offered up for the sins of the entire world. With the same faith of Simeon and Anna, granted to us by the Holy Spirit, we can come running to the cross, to Jesus, and give thanks to the Lord above for the salvation given to us through Christ. He kills and makes alive. He causes us to fall and then raises us up again. *Holy Spirit, grant us the faith of Simeon and Anna. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 121—A Psalm of Ascent**

This Psalm was meant to be sung by pilgrims as they first laid their eyes on the hills surrounding Jerusalem. For the Old Testament Israelite, their eyes would be lifted up to those hills and know that God had placed Himself in that city, within the Temple, in order to be with His people and deliver them salvation. We don't hold Jerusalem in the same reverence as the Israelites did, but in a way we do cast our eyes to the hills in order to see where our help comes. It comes from that holy hill of Golgotha, where God placed Himself on a cross to be with His people and deliver them salvation. What other help could we ever need except the help of the cross? There salvation was won. So we receive it this very day in His Word and Sacraments. *Lord, keep us from all evil; keep our life. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: **Galatians 4:1-7—Sons of God**

The Father sent His Son, born of the flesh just like us, born under the Law just like us, so that He could fulfill what we cannot. Before Christ we were slaves to the Law, but now we have been freed from it. None of this is from ourselves, none of it is of our own merit. Christ has fulfilled the Law and made us, worthless slaves, to be worthy sons and heirs; heirs of all that He has won and accomplished. We are heirs to everything that He has, even now, as all things are placed under His feet. What He has, we have too; even if we don't experience it in full right now. But that is alright, for while we are still in this Vale of Tears where the Law still has its way with us and crushes us constantly, we can cry out in the Spirit to our Father in heaven and He has promised to hear His little children for the sake of His Son. *Abba! Father! Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: **Isaiah 11:1-5—The Righteous Branch**

From the dead stump of Jesse comes the Righteous Branch of Christ. There could be no other way. The tree had to die in order that the weak little branch could shoot forth from its roots. And this branch does the backwards things of not judging with what His eyes see or what His ears hear. For what His eyes see is the stump in each and every one of us. And what His ears hear is the Law declaring that we are dead. But He judges us with a righteousness apart from the Law, or at least apart from our fulfilling of the Law. Instead, His judgment for us is of the Gospel; it is of His righteous fulfilling of the Law. It is a judgment of the cross given to us even though we don't deserve it. That is the promise of this prophecy, that the Righteous Branch will make alive the long dead stump in all of us. *Father, judge me with the righteousness of Christ. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: **Luke 2:22-32—Nunc Dimittis**

Simeon sung a song that has stood the test of time. We get to sing it as well, after the Service of the Sacrament. It makes sense that we should sing the words that God put on Simeon's lips as he took the Christ-child up into his arms. For we too, at the altar, have taken up the Christ, not into our arms, but He has placed Himself on our lips, body and blood. And thus, right there, we have seen the salvation of our Lord in bread that is more than bread and wine that is more than wine. We also get to sing this song at funerals and that is just as fitting. For after all of the years in which the departed had received Jesus, they have now gone peacefully from this Vale of Tears to their eternal home with their Savior. It's a song of salvation. May the church never forget it and never cease to sing it. *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: **Hebrews 2:9-16—Crowned With Glory and Honor**

When we think of Jesus crowned with glory and honor we usually think of Him sitting at the right hand of the Father with all things placed under His feet. And this is true. As we speak, Christ is crowned in the heavens. He is crowned not because of His otherworldly majesty and lordship as Creator, but because of His suffering and death. The Evangelist, Luke, will speak of Him in this way, and so will Paul when talking about the cross. Christ is crowned because He was crucified. He is crowned because He has freed the world, you and me, from our captivity to sin, death, and the devil. He is crowned because He was crowned with thorns that pierced His brow and shed His blood for the forgiveness of all peoples' sin. If we want to ponder the glory of God, look no further than Christ Jesus on the cross. *May I receive the glory of the cross for the salvation of my soul. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: **Psalms 111—The Greatness of the Lord's Works**

The works of creation are amazing. They truly are. May we never forget them and continually meditate on them, but let us not stop there. For a God who only creates is a God that does not save. May we always couple our pondering of Creation with the pondering of Salvation. May the Lord continually make known His great and majestic works: the works of a Law fulfilled when it could never be so; sin forgiven when it threatened to plague us forever; Satan's head crushed through the death of Jesus; death killed through the resurrection of Christ. These are the works of God that bring redemption to an irredeemable people. When we ponder God's works, let us ponder Christ and His passion, for there we find a work that outdoes Creation. *Gracious Savior, bring to light the works of Your hands so that we might be redeemed. Amen.*

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