

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Isaiah 40:20, Psalm 66:1, 17, 19-20**

With a voice of singing, declare, proclaim this, utter it to the end of the earth. Alle- | luia.*

The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob! Alle- | luia.

Make a joyful shout to God, | all the earth!*

Sing out the honor | of His name.

I cried to Him | with my mouth,*

and He was extolled | with my tongue.

Certainly God has | heard me;*

He has attended to the voice | of my prayer.

Blessed be God, who has not turned a- | way my prayer,*

nor His mer- | cy from me!

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **John 16:24b**

“Ask and receive, that your joy may be full.”

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
Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above

TLH 103

Martin Luther



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| 1. Our Father, Thou in heaven above, Who biddest us to dwell in love, As brethren of one family, To cry in every need to Thee, Teach us no thoughtless word to say, But from our inmost heart to pray. | 8. From evil, Lord, deliver us; The times and days are perilous. Redeem us from eternal death, And when we yield our dying breath, Console us, grant us calm release, And take our souls to Thee in peace. |
| 2. Thy name be hallowed. Help us, Lord, In purity to keep Thy Word, That to the glory of thy name We walk before Thee free from blame. Let no false doctrine us pervert; All poor, deluded souls convert. | 9. Amen, that is, So shall it be. Confirm our faith and hope in Thee That we may doubt not, but believe What here we ask we shall receive. Thus in Thy name and at Thy word We say: Amen. Oh, hear us, Lord! Amen. |



“He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God”

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: He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God

This week's theme, "He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God," reminds us that without our sacrificed and risen Savior, without His ascension to the Father's right hand, we'd be cut off from God. We would still be chained to sins, guilt, and judgment. We would still be ignorant about who God is and what He thinks about us. Prayer would be like casting words into the sky. Praise God that not only has Jesus revealed the Father's gracious heart to us by His Word, He also carries our petitions to the Father. By what right? By the right of His own reconciling death. Therefore, Jesus says, "Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 16:23-30 "The Father Himself Loves You"

Prayer is tricky business. Because this fruit of faith is so effective against the devil and his kingdom, that is where the old murderer mounts his assault. Before you lift your eyes to heaven, before your knees touch the ground, the devil begins to argue. He will bring up every sin that makes you a hypocrite for praying. He will bring up how pathetic it looks to be asking God for help now, though you should have asked Him weeks and months before. The devil will say your petitions will only anger God, not please Him. The devil is a liar. Dear Christian, the Father Himself loves you. Jesus has promised. His death and resurrection have made it true. Rest your faith here and take heart. Teach me to call upon You in the day of trouble, *O Lord, for You answer me. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 84 "Longing for the Lord's Courts"

To our eyes the estates of the government, family, and church appear broken. The government forgets that it is supposed to protect liberty, not destroy it. The family crumbles under the weight of betrayals and resentment. The church shrivels in on itself with fear. That is why the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray for the Courts of the Lord, to pray for our spiritual rest and protection in Jesus' unbreakable Word, the church's true source and foundation. Cowardice and sin cannot destroy it. The worldly estates, managed by sinful hands, will always be less than what God intends. But God's Word of Gospel, which upholds our faith and the church that is not built by human hands, survives and flourishes. *O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in You! Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: James 1:22-27 "Be Doers?"

The Pope's church wants your conscience tied up in knots over this passage, wondering whether faith is enough to justify or if something else needs to be added. Heaven forbid! St. James speaks about sanctification, our growth in holiness on this earth, not the heavenly righteousness promised by God's Word and received by faith alone. Should Christians be doers of the Word, exercising their faith in this world by prayer and good works? Of course! Any Christian who insists that they don't need to obey the Ten Commandments betrays their liberty to live God pleasing lives. Therefore, be certain of your salvation for Christ's sake. Also, be bold in visiting the afflicted and keeping yourself unstained from the world. *Have mercy, O Lord. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 29:11-14 "The Lord's Plans"

The Lord sees what you cannot. Take comfort in this. You might see nothing but sorrow and defeat. The virus continues to claim its dead. The churches continue to be either closed or restrained in giving access to the sanctuary. When will it end? Will the "new normal" keep the body of Christ from gathering as it had in the past? But the Lord sees His plans fulfilled "to give you a future and hope." The Lord sees the day when this crisis is forgotten. The Lord sees this fallen world giving way to the new heavens and earth on the day of His Son's judgment. He sees His church's faith vindicated. He sees your resurrection, life, and eternal victory. *Gather me by faith in Your promises, O Lord, that I may share in the restoration of Your church. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Mark 16:14-20 "St. Mark's Blunt Resurrection Account"

These verses summarize the 40 days leading up to Jesus' ascension. The Lord bursts onto the scene like a lion jumping out from concealment. He ambushes the disciples with a sermon on faith. They should have believed the women. He next commands the gospel to be preached, promises salvation by baptism and faith, and warns against unbelief, which condemns. Don not be surprised by the list of "signs." All these were fulfilled in the Apostle's day to confirm the divinity of their message. Finally, in the full stature of His exulted person, Jesus is taken into heaven and sits at the Father's right hand. This is not abandonment.

In majesty He works to save sinners through His preaching of forgiveness and hope. *Grant me joy in Your ascension, O Lord. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:24-28 "Hope, the Spirit, and Intercession"

Hope, St. Paul explains, both grasps what is not seen and waits for its fulfillment with patience. This is not a human attitude that we can stir up within our own minds and souls. This is a heavenly gift from the Holy Spirit, Who helps us in our weakness. Our eyes can scarcely make sense of the troubles we witness. Our minds cannot comprehend how good can come from any of it. This is why the Spirit's gift of hope sets our hearts on things that are both eternal and unseen. He grants us to know our Lord Jesus by faith. He teaches us to long for the resurrection of our bodies. When our words and prayers falter, He Himself intercedes for us. *O Lord, grant that I take comfort in the knowledge that all things work together for good for those who love You. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 124 "Escape!"

Though the Lord has instituted the governing authorities for our good, that does not mean that men and women cannot sin against their offices of upholding justice and liberty. The temptation to advance their godless ideologies or personal agendas can be too enticing to resist. We live in a day when some of them have risen against the church, opening businesses they deem essential while commanding the churches to remain shuttered, all in the name of health and safety. Some of them feel free to tell Christians not to baptize and how to administer the Lord's body and blood. Dear saints, don't be afraid. The Lord is on your side. Though men rise against us, the Lord will not give us as prey to their teeth. *Our help is in Your name, O Lord! Amen.*

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