PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK  Wisdom 1:7; Psalm 68:1, 3, 4, 11, 33, 35

The Spirit of the Lord fills the world. Alleluia.

Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice exceedingly. Alleluia.

Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let those also who hate Him flee before Him.

Sing to God, sing praises to His name; extol Him who rides on the clouds.

The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of those who proclaimed it.

He sends out His voice, a mighty voice.

The God of Israel gives strength and power to His people.

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.
THEME OF THE WEEK: The Holy Spirit: Creator of the Church

Almighty God purposefully and intentionally created the heavens and earth and all that is in them. We, too, are the intentional fruit of His Creation, children of the Heavenly Father. Our Lord is also the Creator of the Church. We are gathered together to receive the love of God in Christ Jesus—not by our doing, but by the generous working of His Holy Spirit. Luther explains in the Third Article of the Creed: “I cannot of my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him: but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel . . . even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth.”

SCRIPTURE: John 14:23-31 “The Helper, the Holy Spirit”

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him.” These words of our Lord can sound like a tall order. We often lead our lives, thinking that we can or we must by our own reason and strength, achieve them. Our zeal soon fades; our understanding falls short; doubts creep in; and we wander. Luther makes this reality clear in his explanation of the Third Article of the Creed: “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel.” Our Lord sends His Spirit that we may know Him though the Word of His Son. Heavenly Father, by the power of Your Spirit, keep us steadfast in Your Word that we may be kept eternally in Your love. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 48 “He will Guide us Forever.”

“Behold, the kings assembled: they came on together.” It’s nothing new. The rulers of the world attack that which causes them offense, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. Still today, Christians who cling to the Word of Life are often belittled, ridiculed, and persecuted. God defends His own: He protects that which is His. When the kings draw close, they are driven away in fear. Our Lord has made Himself known as a fortress. We dwell in the steadfast love of the Lord and gave thanks for His protection. By the power of His Spirit the Church is kept safe in Christ Jesus. In faith, we sing “built on the Rock the Church shall stand, even when steeples are falling.” Lord, as we dwell in Your steadfast love, guide us forevermore. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 4:7-11 “Keep Loving One Another Earnestly”

Our default setting is self. By nature we are focused inward. The world constantly encourages us to pursue our passions. Contrary to the teaching of the world, our passions do not lead to happiness. They lead us into debauchery and worldliness. The Christian Church is commanded to pursue a different path. The Church, the communion of saints, is called to be united in love and truth. Our Lord died for the sins of the world. On the Day of Pentecost, the words of the prophet Joel were fulfilled. The Spirit of God was sent out unto the world. “I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.” No one is excluded. There are no prerequisites, no required lineage. The Spirit is set loose that our hearts and minds might be opened to confess the truth, “Jesus is Lord.” And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” The Spirit of God was poured upon you in your baptism. Rejoice in the salvation of the Lord! Lord, by the power of Your Spirit, deliver me from my passions that I might lovingly serve my neighbors to Your glory. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: John 14:15-21 “To be with you forever.”

The Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of truth,” is sent unto us by the Father, at the request of the Son. God’s love for us is steadfast. We are conditioned in our day and age to believe that love comes and goes, springs up and dies. As we look around and at ourselves, this seems all too easily proven. This is not so with the love of God in Christ Jesus. We are never abandoned. The “Helper” is sent to be with us forever. We received Him in our baptism. We know Him, for He dwells with us and is in us. We are not left as orphans. We are adopted by the Father, through the Son, by the action of the Holy Spirit. Gracious Father, may Your love continue to fill me that I may, with the aid of Your Helper, return Your love by keeping Your commandments. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 4:7-16 “We are to Grow into Him Who is the Head.”

Every “new” teaching catches our eye and tempts us to stray. The cunning, craftiness, and deceitful schemes of the world tug at our reason. We are tossed to and fro by the waves. Children must grow up. We cannot totter forever. We are called to grow into Him Who is the Head—Christ. We are fed by the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and teachers who nourish us with the Word of God and, thereby, build us up into the body of Christ. Made a part of the body, through the working of the Holy Spirit, we are directed by Christ. In Christ, we grow and mature even as we are built up in love. In Christ, we are equipped to weather any storm. Lord, may the proclamation of Your Word unite us and build us up in the body, of which You are the head. Amen.

SCRIPTURE: Joel 2:28-32 “I will Pour Out My Spirit on all Flesh.”

Jesus died for the sins of the world. On the Day of Pentecost, the words of the prophet Joel were fulfilled. The Spirit of God was sent out unto the world. “I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.” No one is excluded. There are no prerequisites, no required lineage. The Spirit is set loose that our hearts and minds might be opened to confess the truth, “Jesus is Lord.” And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” The Spirit of God was poured upon you in your baptism. Rejoice in the salvation of the Lord! Lord, apart from You we have no life. May the gift of Your life-giving Spirit continue to sustain us in the true confession that we may be saved. Amen.

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