



**Gethsemane Lutheran Church**  
 P.O. Box 98  
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 E-mail: [Goffice@gsslutheran.org](mailto:Goffice@gsslutheran.org)

*Our Shared Mission: We are saved by grace through faith to share the good news of the Gospel with all people and live God's love by our words and actions.*

**Reverend Brenda L. Greenwald**  
 Phone/Text: 720.989.8218  
 E-mail: [Pastor@gsslutheran.org](mailto:Pastor@gsslutheran.org)



**St. Stephen's Lutheran Church**  
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## JOINT NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2020



*While we give thanks for the many weeks of outdoor worship in the spacious, Stephenson Pavilion, we find ourselves continuing to be **Reformers**, ever-changing to meet the needs of the times and our people.*

*In the true spirit of the **Reformation** (which we will celebrate on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October - wear **red** at home!) and with COVID cases on the rise, we are no longer meeting outside, and will be worshipping*

**ONLINE ONLY during OCTOBER.**

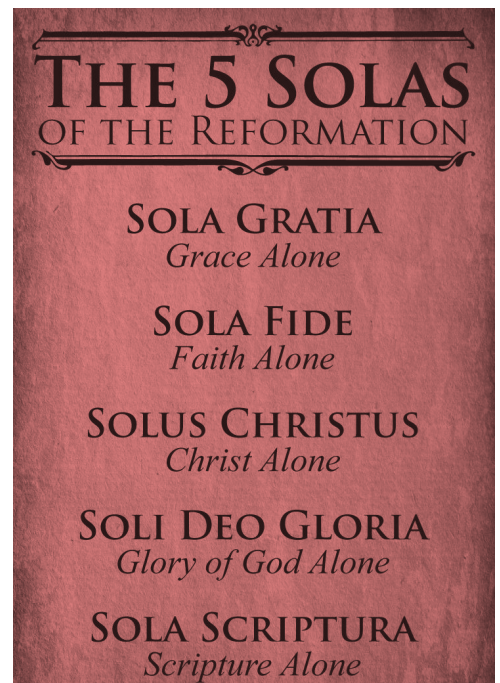
The services are uploaded to our **Facebook Pages** each weekend, and feature Scripture readings, prayers, hymns, and a sermon.

You are also invited to watch **Daily Devotions** at either of these links, too.

*Please reach out to Pastor Brenda if you have any connection issues or tech questions.*



<http://bit.ly/GethMI>  
<http://bit.ly/StephMIA>



**Worship: ONLINE ONLY during OCTOBER**

**OCTOBER 4, 2020**  
**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY**  
**AFTER PENTECOST**

taking+  
 faith  
 home

*We want to know Christ Jesus.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 21:33-46</b>	<b>Parable of the vineyard tenants</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 5:1-7</b>	<b>A song about a vineyard</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Philippians 3:4b-14</b>	<b>To know Christ</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Exodus 20:1-20</b>	<b>The Ten Commandments</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Psalms 19</b>	<b>The wonders of God</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>1 Peter 2:1-10</b>	<b>A chosen people</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 80:7-15</b>	<b>Prayer for Israel's deliverance</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 22:1-14</b>	<b>Parable of the wedding feast</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death.  
**Philippians 3:10 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty God, help us to trust that in your death there is eternal life and in suffering there is the power of love through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Nurturing God, we thank you for this food; help us to use food wisely so that others may have enough to eat. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May God bless you to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. (Philippians 3:10)



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**OCTOBER 4, 2020**  
**HYMN OF THE WEEK**  
*Come and Fill Our Hearts*

taking+  
 faith  
 home

**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Describe or think about what you feel are the characteristics of a good friend.
- Are you a good friend? How would others describe you?
- How does your faith in Jesus free you to care for—even feel the pain of—others?

**DEVOTIONS**

Read: Philippians 3:4b-14.

We don't get it. According to research on American religious views, we want to be saved by God because we are "good people." We prefer to rely on our own merits rather than trust the power of Christ's death and resurrection that conquers our sin. Perhaps this is part of the sinful self-centeredness that Christ comes to cleanse us of. Paul writes to the church at Philippi and points out that if anyone has a claim to self-righteousness based on the law that measures our goodness, Paul would be pretty unbeatable; he would be "blameless" (v. 6). But he counts all of his religious success as "loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (v. 8). The truly amazing part of his testimony is that knowing Christ does not free him from suffering; he is not concerned about why "bad things happen to good people." Paul announces his freedom to suffer with Christ. This "theology of the cross" sees life in death, sees joy in suffering and sees hope in despair. Paul presses "on to make it my own" (v. 12). He is announcing a view of life, and this way of life sees Christ as the source of all our hopes of salvation. How is freedom from judging our own goodness important to our salvation?  
**Pray: Dear God, help us to know Jesus; may we focus our attention on the needs of others and to care for them through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**SERVICE**

Grapevines and vineyards are written about more than any other plant in the Bible. They were important in Biblical times and part of the culture. They were often used as symbols of producing fruit. In this context, fruit means one's actions that come from the heart. Place grapes in a bowl and as you eat them, think about what it means for you to produce good fruits (take positive actions). What positive actions can you take to care for others?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

In Philippians 3, Paul talks about pressing towards the goal to reach the prize of knowing Christ Jesus. Think about a time you tried to reach a goal. What happened? Whether we reach the goal or not, God is always with us. **Pray: Lord, help us to keep our eye on the goal, the prize of the "heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)



We trust in the comfort and hope of the Resurrection for the Thoune family upon the death of + **Shirley Thoune** +

**We continue to hold in prayer:**

- Keith Thoune Tracy Klatt
- Dean Gerue Shirley Wangerin
- Wayne Sundstrom
- Stephanie Walren Tammy Parrett
- Emily Christenson Evelyn Gewerth
- Christine Havelka Karen Raether
- Lewis Nicholson Lorrie Stone
- Robert & Macy Berzsenyi
- Denise Marineau Lois Azelton
- Caitlin Christophersen David Kohrt
- Connie Kendrick Luann Q. Kiefer
- Michelle Bouchard Darcy Fournier
- Bob Slight Larry Pepin
- Julee Nordin Tammy Veraghen
- Brian Raether Sheila Konkel
- Tom Wenger Mike Lubore
- Coralee Mack Kevin Havelka
- Deloris Erickson Crystal Salo
- Tony Gill Becca Merk
- Al Macco Lee Scherer
- Steve Bogdan Don Freis
- Dan Etelamaki Wally Etelamaki
- Audrey Anderson Rob Boe
- Krista and Paul Hendricks

*Thank you for holding the friends and family of our Congregants in your daily prayers.*

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

*Please keep the office informed as to the status of people on this list, and when to remove their name.*

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

*Corrections? Additions? Please contact the Church Office. Thanks!*

**THEIR NAME.**



- Jared Jurmu
- Brent Jurmu
- James Dutkavich
- Jay Chapple
- Thomas Dutkavich
- Julie Tanguay
- Trish Dams

*Birthday Blessing*

- 1 Becky Thoune
- 5 Tena Roubal, Matt Thoune
- 6 John Beardsley
- 8 Carol Klein, Peter Thoune
- 9 Chelsea Christophersen
- 12 Coralee Mack
- 17 Lincoln Dubey
- 18 Mike Burie
- 19 Christine Havelka
- 20 Dave Peretto, Gail Schmidt
- 21 Doug Klein, Paul Kowalski, Rebecca Roberts
- 22 Tim Leiphart, Chuck Wade
- 23 Gloria Bogdan
- 24 Ava Klatt
- 26 Jamie Crawford

*Happy Anniversary!*

- 7 Grace & Danette Bergquist
- 8 Nick & Nancy Diehm
- 10 Ken & Sandy Chaney, Al and Carol Lindner
- 22 Brad and Jenny Rasner
- 21 Harlan & Judy Anderson
- 23 Scott and Sarah Krzych
- 24 Jim and Sandy Gill



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF**

**WANTED: BEDSHEETS**  
(full, queen, king)

The Quilters of Gethsemane are looking for used/new bedsheets to use to complete their quilts. Making **Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts** is a tangible way to express love to our neighbors in need. Quilts can be used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor coverings. Each one reflects God's loving presence in a world rife with suffering. Drop off on **Parsonage Porch** or call **Janet** at (906) 374-0138 to donate. **THANKS!**

**OCTOBER 11, 2020**  
**NINETEENTH SUNDAY**  
**AFTER PENTECOST**

taking+  
 faith  
 home

*God's grace makes a difference in our lives.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 22:1-14</b>	<b>Parable of the wedding feast</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 25:1-9</b>	<b>A prayer of thanks to God</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Philippians 4:1-9</b>	<b>Paul encourages his co-workers</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Exodus 32:1-14</b>	<b>The people make an idol</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23</b>	<b>A nation asks for forgiveness</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Matthew 5:1-11</b>	<b>The Beatitudes</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 23</b>	<b>The Lord is my shepherd</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 22:15-22</b>	<b>The question of paying taxes</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

Finally beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. **Philippians 4:8 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear God, guide our thoughts and actions in ways that reflect your reign of goodness and mercy through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, you who promise us a feast of rich food, help us to take joy in this meal today. Amen. (Isaiah 25:6)

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)



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**OCTOBER 11, 2020**  
**HYMN OF THE WEEK**  
*Just As I Am, without  
 One Plea*

**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk or think about a time you went to a party filled with friends, food, and laughter.
- Would you invite someone off the street who you do not know to a party? Why or why not?
- God's love in the Bible is seen sometimes as an invitation to a great party or feast. What does this say about God?

**DEVOTIONS**

Read: Matthew 22:1-14.

It is said we can have our own opinions, but not our own facts. Similarly, you can have your own message, but not your own Christian gospel. Matthew makes it clear that the good news of Jesus is powerful. God's mercy has the last word; it includes a divine judgment that says that the marginalized, the belittled, the "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3) will be blessed (v. 10). If we take the grace of God for granted, we not only miss the feast, we miss the fact that "many are called, but few are chosen" (v. 14). This text is from Jesus' final week before his crucifixion. The people see him as a prophet, a true messenger of God (Matthew 21:46), but soon he will suffer, be humiliated, and die. There will be false prophets who come along. They are like the guest who is not wearing the proper clothing and their message will be rejected. Our life in Christ will not be associated with messages and actions of hate, racism, prejudice or contempt for the poor. God's grace makes a difference in our lives and in the world in which we live. How does God's grace challenge your thoughts and actions toward people who are different from you?

*Pray: God of grace and mercy, cleanse us of our way of life that can become indifferent to the people you love through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**SERVICE**

There is a theme this week about feasts and hospitality. Hospitality is receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, kind, and generous way. Think about what it means to show hospitality. Invite someone you may not know very well to your house for a meal.

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

Psalms 23 is one of the most well-known scriptures in the Bible. This psalm is the shepherd David's song to God. David likens how a shepherd cares for sheep to how God loves each one of us. Write a list of ways a shepherd cares for sheep. Look at your list and think about God caring for you in these ways. *Pray: Lord, thank you for caring for me and leading me with love. Amen.*



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)

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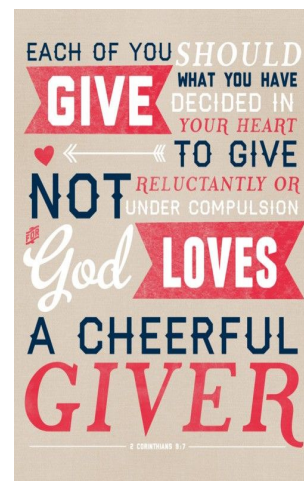
## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE & NEWS FROM FORTUNE LAKE



*This month's newsletter includes an update on how each Congregation is doing financially. **See page 11.***

*The Councils met **separately** during the month of September to go over budgetary matters, and to talk about what can be done to encourage **continued stewardship and tithing.***

***PLEASE** continue to give of your **hearts** so that each congregation will find themselves in a healthy space, post-pandemic, to continue the ministries of **Christ.***



**Fall Greetings from Fortune Lake!** We pray your congregations and communities are healthy as you lean into the promises of our faithful Lord. There is a lot happening at our Place of Grace, although much you like you, things look different.

### **Virtual Fall Fest Auction!**

We've got over 70 hand-made quilts and fine art items, and this year, we'll be auctioning some Fortune Lake experiences! This event is our largest fundraiser of the year, and all proceeds offset the cost of our ministry. All bidding will take place on our secure auction website: [www.auctria.com/auction/fortunelake](http://www.auctria.com/auction/fortunelake)



- **October 3, 10-11am CDT--Virtual LIVE Auction** Join us remotely for the opportunity to bid on select, high-quality items. The LIVE stream will be broadcast on Facebook live, and the bidding will take place on the same secure website through Auctria.
- **October 3, 1pm CDT--Virtual Silent Auction Closes**

### **Workshop series *Building Resilience: Mind, Body, and Spirit***

After the rave reviews from our Yoga and Winter Wellness Retreats, we're so excited to offer this remote experience in partnership with Pam Roose, Certified Dietitian and Owner of *Inspiring Roots LLC*.

- The online community will gather **each Monday evening in October from 6-7:30 Central** for devotions, demos, discussion, and optional yoga. Weekly topics include Breathing & Being Present, Fueling Our Bodies, Microgreens & Other Healthy Ingredients, and Building a Resilience Toolkit. More information will soon be available at <https://fortunelake.org/> at on our Facebook page. The cost for all four sessions is \$50, and online registration is open now at <https://bit.ly/FLLCRegister>

**Grace & Peace, Amanda Rasner - Camp Director**

OCTOBER 18, 2020  
 TWENTIETH SUNDAY  
 AFTER PENTECOST

taking+  
 faith  
 home

*God does great things through people.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

- Sunday Matthew 22:15-22 The question of paying taxes
- Monday Isaiah 45:1-7 Cyrus serves the Lord
- Tuesday 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 The example of faith
- Wednesday Exodus 33:12-23 Moses' intercession
- Thursday Psalm 99 Our Lord is king
- Friday Isaiah 42:1-9 The Lord's servant
- Saturday Psalm 96:1-13 Sing a new song
- Sunday Matthew 22:34-46 Loving God and neighbor

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear God, use our gifts, our faith, our hope in you, to do labors of love for the sake of Jesus Christ and his reign on earth. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for how you provide for us and for the hands that have brought this food to us today. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the God who has chosen you in love, give you grace and peace. (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 4)



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OCTOBER 18, 2020

**HYMN OF THE WEEK**

*Open Your Ears,  
 O Faithful People*

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 faith  
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**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you have accomplished and are proud of?
- How can God use your efforts—your deeds—for others?
- Is it a surprise that God can use your efforts to accomplish God's will on earth? Explain.

**DEVOTIONS**

*Read: Isaiah 45:1-7.*

Cyrus is a Persian king. He is not part of God's chosen people through Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Cyrus doesn't even know the God of Israel, and yet Cyrus does God's will by setting God's people free to return home from exile in Babylon. Isaiah lifts up the supreme power and authority of God's rule throughout the world. Besides the LORD, there is no god (v. 5). All that is, is God's. It is easy for us to forget that God can use others outside of the body of Christ to do God's will on earth. No wonder Psalm 96 commands all the earth to sing to the LORD (v. 1). In the midst of the tragedies that happen all too often around us, it is important to remember that we are a people of hope and trust in the God who holds all things together. The Apostle Paul wrote with thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' faith, love, and hope (1 Thessalonians 1:3). As a chosen people, Paul gladly affirms that they do God's work of love on earth through their "work of faith" and "steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 3). How does God's rule on earth give you hope and encourage you to act with love and faith?

*Pray: God of power and might, we thank you for your glory that breathes hope and love into all corners of the earth through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**SERVICE**

God is the ruler of all of creation and we, God's servants, have responsibility to care for all that God has created. One of the greatest concerns for our world today is to care for the earth that is suffering under the weight of carbon emissions, overflowing landfills and polluted air and water. What can you do to reduce the waste that harms the earth?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

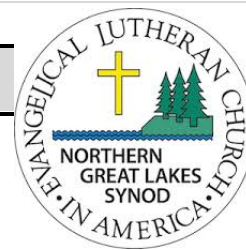
Psalm 96 is a song of praise to God. It tells of the sea roaring, the creatures and fields rejoicing, and the trees singing. In what ways do you praise God through sounds and music? Sing a favorite Christian hymn. Think about what the words say about God. Then say: **Sing a new song to the Lord! Everyone on this earth, sing praises to the Lord, sing and praise his name.** (vv.1-2a)



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)



## UPDATE FROM BISHOP KATHERINE FINEGAN



Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

There has been some recent confusion on language from the Governor of the State of Michigan about recommendations regarding indoor event capacity in the UP. These matters certainly affect considerations for indoor worship services.

Per Executive Order 2020-176, the UP (Region 8) could have indoor events up to 25% of maximum capacity or 250 people, whichever is smaller. (Section 8)

A recent Executive Order 2020-181 seemed to indicate a reduction of that indoor capacity to 10 people statewide.

Later, the office of the governor clarified that this order 2020-181 does not apply to the UP (Region 8), since the UP is still in Phase 5 of the Michigan Economic Recovery Commission reopening plan. FAQs: <http://bit.ly/2020176FAQ> PRESS ARTICLE: <http://bit.ly/Indoor68>

Governor Whitmer, in a September 24 interview with TV6 Marquette, indicates that she does not intend to tighten restrictions in the UP, although she is concerned about the rising COVID cases in our area. TV6 Interview with the Governor: <http://bit.ly/MITVIncrease>

So, the 25% / 250 maximum at an indoor event remains the interpretation of capacities for indoor events in the UP.

Pastors and congregational leaders should continue to carefully discuss protocols regarding indoor worship. The science is clear that indoor venues pose a greater risk than outdoor venues all things being equal. You are encouraged to assess the size of your sanctuary space and the local context of COVID cases. There are many resources on the synod website for you to consider making your decisions. There is no mandate from the Bishop's office regarding your worship decisions, but recommendations have been offered as well-informed guidelines and they include the following:

- Abide by the local, state and CDC guidelines.
- Masks required.
- Maintain social distancing except among immediate family members.
- Track the names of people present in case contact tracing is needed.
- No congregational singing.
- No fellowship meals.
- No passing of the offering plate.
- Plan for possibility of multiple worship spaces if needed.
- Stay home if you have any symptoms at all or age and health put you in a high-risk category.
- Have your social conversations outside in the open air.
- Pray for your pastor and leaders who are continually monitoring the situation and making decisions.
- Talk with your insurance company for recommendations about assuring safety/minimizing liability.

As always, we hold the health and well-being of the most vulnerable among us as our highest priority. As schools open and then close again, as cases rise, we must continue to be vigilant. This requires no small amount of patience.

Thank you for your understanding as we take the time to find needed clarity with Governors' orders, mask mandates, and the best practices as put forth by reliable sources of information.

Yours in Christ,  
Bishop Katherine Finegan

OCTOBER 25, 2020  
REFORMATION  
SUNDAY

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faith  
home

*Disciples have a trusted relationship with Jesus.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 8:31-36	The Son makes you free
Monday	Jeremiah 31:31-34	The new covenant
Tuesday	Romans 3:19-28	True righteousness
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	Moses is buried in Moab
Thursday	Psalms 90:1-17	God is eternal
Friday	Galatians 2:15-21	Justified through faith
Saturday	Psalms 46	God is our refuge
Sunday	Matthew 5:1-12	The beatitudes

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." **John 8:31-32 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Gracious God, keep your faithful people steadfast in your word so that we may receive your freedom and truth through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Meatime Prayer:**

Dear God of glory and might, with this gift of food we remember the gift of faith that strengthens us and renews us daily through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the Lord bless you with a relationship to God through faith in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:24)



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OCTOBER 25, 2020  
HYMN OF THE WEEK  
*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

taking+  
faith  
home

**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk or think about what it takes to have a strong, ongoing relationship with a friend.
- What gets in the way of a friendship?
- Talk or think about what it takes to have a strong, ongoing relationship with Jesus.

**DEVOTIONS**

Read: John 8:31-36.

It is the power of the word that Jesus brings that gives us freedom from sin. That word is first and foremost Jesus, the Word that became flesh (John 1:14). Christian disciples "continue" or remain in the freeing and saving word of God. The Gospel of John emphasizes that the follower of Jesus has an ongoing relationship to him by continuing "in my word" (8:31). To know the truth that sets one free is more than to know information; it is to live in a relationship to Jesus through faith. The challenge at the time of the Reformation—and today as well—is for the church to promote a living relationship with God, a relationship that depends on faith in Jesus, the Son of God. We experience this relationship through worship, prayer, reading the Bible, and serving and loving one's neighbor for the sake of Christ. How do you continue to live each day as a disciple of Jesus?

*Pray: Almighty God, help me to trust in Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord and have life in his name. Amen.*

**SERVICE**

Martin Luther wrote, "God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does." An important theme of the Reformation is that all Christians are called to serve others through their baptisms. Think about friends and neighbors in your community who may need help or support in some way. What good works can you do to serve them in Jesus' name?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

Martin Luther wrote the words for *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* and composed the melody. This well-known hymn is based on Psalm 46. After reading this psalm once, make a list of words from it that help you understand God as a mighty fortress. Read Psalm 46 again and pause for a moment when you read a word from your list. After finishing, say, "Amen."



**+** **THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR BRENDA**

**Greetings, Church.**

My time at the **Spent Dandelion** Theological Retreat Center was restorative and full of reflection. How grateful I am to both congregations for providing such time away by supporting such Continue Education opportunities.

The pacing of life was MUCH calmer: no e-mail to check, no alarms to set, and not even any Zoom calls to which I must pay attention (hallelujah)! I was able to pre-record the daily devotionals before I left town, and schedule them to release online each day....*though, I'm pretty sure most of you tuned in, just to see what the cats would do next!*



*Daily Devos: Wallace and Cinco, atop the fridge. Stephenson, hiding below.*

Rest assured, (*see what I did there...rest...reflect...retreat*), my theological brain was deeply engaged in daily conversations with the Director of the Retreat Center, the **Rev. Dr. Anna Madsen**. I'd invite you to learn more about her and her endearing faith story by visiting this link here: <http://omgcenter.com/>

I would meet with Anna for hours each day, discussing everything from **quantum physics** (*and its intersection with the tenets of Christianity*) to **bowling** (*with the pins representing the many redeemable and redeemed moments in our lives*). Below, is an excerpt from an article Anna wrote, specifically about these moments. I'm so thankful it captures the important parts of our conversation:

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*According to something called "process theology," in every single moment—as in every nanosecond, the tiniest sliver of time imaginable—**God is active**. God is active, and God is luring us into the next moment. That's the word process theologians use: **lure**. God knows what God wants to happen in the next moment(s), but God can't orchestrate it. If God could, then we would be nothing more than chess players on a board or actors on a stage. We'd have no autonomy and only passive roles in life.*



*Instead, process theology says that God lures us into the next moment according to **what God knows** has happened and is happening in that moment. Sometimes, like that big bass anglers hope to catch, we do actually catch the lure, and we are drawn into the next moment as God hopes we will be. And from that moment, in the same way, God lures us into the next intended moment **according to God's will**.*

*---Full article/Bible Study can be found at: <http://bit.ly/GodLures>*

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Think about those powerful words: we are **ACTIVELY LURED** by a God who walks WITH us, not some grand, puppet master who directs our moves. God wants to be in relationship with us. **US!**

Can you just picture Anna and I sitting in our lawn chair (*6ft apart, of course*) at 8:00am each morning, discussing things like this!? I pushed back when it came to terrible moments that I couldn't IMAGINE being able to be redeemed (*death, murder, adultery*), and she led me again and again toward how GOD has worked through EACH moment, not just the ones WE think were "good" or worth redeeming. We are to be in each moment...WITH God.

Having corresponded with Anna for years, it was great to finally learn side by side, and I'm already looking forward to when I can return and further explore these fascinating aspects of theology with her!

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**Leaning into God's active luring with you,**

**Pr. Brenda**





## DAILY DEVOTIONS

FROM THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY

Thu – Oct 1	Jeremiah 2:14-22	Colossians 2:16-23	Psalm 80:7-15
Fri – Oct 2	Jeremiah 2:23-37	Philippians 2:14-18	Psalm 80:7-15
Sat – Oct 3	Jeremiah 6:1-10	John 7:40-52	Psalm 80:7-15

**Sunday Oct 4 – 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      **Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:7-15, Philippians 3:4b-14, Matthew 21:33-46**

*Prayer of the Day:* Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.

Mon – Oct 5	Ezekiel 19:10-14 1	Peter 2:4-10	Psalm 144
Tue – Oct 6	Isaiah 27:1-6	2 Corinthians 5:17-21	Psalm 144
Wed – Oct 7	Song of Solomon 8:5-14	John 11:45-57	Psalm 144
Thu – Oct 8	Isaiah 22:1-8a	1 Peter 5:1-5, 12-14	Psalm 23
Fri – Oct 9	Isaiah 22:8b-14	James 4:4-10	Psalm 23
Sat – Oct 10	Isaiah 24:17-23	Mark 2:18-22	Psalm 23

**Sunday Oct 11 – 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      **Isaiah 25:1-9, Psalm 23, Philippians 4:1-9, Matthew 22:1-14**

*Prayer of the Day:* Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.

Mon – Oct 12	Exodus 19:7-20	Jude 17-25	Psalm 34
Tue – Oct 13	Amos 9:5-15	Philippians 3:13–4:1	Psalm 34
Wed – Oct 14	Song of Sol, 7:10– 8:4	John 6:25-35	Psalm 34
Thu – Oct 15	Judges 17:1-6 3	John 9-12	Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]
Fri – Oct 16	Deut. 17:14-20	1 Peter 5:1-5	Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]
Sat – Oct 17	Isaiah 14:3-11	Matthew 14:1-12	Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

**Sunday Oct 18 – 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      **Isaiah 45:1-7 Psalm 96:1-9, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, Matthew 22:15-22**

*Prayer of the Day:* Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Amen.

Mon – Oct 19	Daniel 3:1-18	Revelation 18:1-10	Psalm 98
Tue – Oct 20	Daniel 3:19-30	Revelation 18:21-24	Psalm 98
Wed – Oct 21	Daniel 6:1-28	Matthew 17:22-27	Psalm 98
Thu – Oct 22	Numbers 5:5-10	Titus 1:5-16	Psalm 1
Fri – Oct 23	Deut. 9:25– 10:5	Titus 2:7-8, 11-15	Psalm 1
Sat – Oct 24	Proverbs 24:23-34	John 5:39-47	Psalm 1

**Sunday Oct 25 – Reformation Sunday**      **Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 46, Romans 3:19-28, John 8:31-36**

*Prayer of the Day:* Gracious Father, we pray for your holy catholic church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.

Mon – Oct 26	Deut. 6:1-9, 20-25	James 2:8-13	Psalm 119:41-48
Tue – Oct 27	Deut. 10:10-22	James 2:14-26	Psalm 119:41-48
Wed – Oct 28	Proverbs 16:1-20	Matthew 19:16-22	Psalm 119:41-48
Thu – Oct 29	1 Samuel 2:27-36	Romans 2:17-29	Psalm 43
Fri – Oct 30	Ezekiel 13:1-16	2 Peter 2:1-3	Psalm 43
Sat – Oct 31	Malachi 1:6–2:9	Matthew 23:13-28	Psalm 43

