

WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

THE BIBLE – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

GOD – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

MAN – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

SIN – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

REDEMPTION – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

FAITH – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

THE CHURCH – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

SACRAMENTS – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper, believing communicants, with the bread and wine, also really receive Christ’s body and blood for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

RESURRECTION – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

INTROIT

Psalm 143:2, 5-6, 10-11; Antiphon: Psalm 143:1

Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my pleas for mercy!

In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!

Enter not into judgment with your servant,

for no one living is righteous before you.

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done;

I ponder the work of your hands.

I stretch out my hands to you;

my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God!

Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!

For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life!

In your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my pleas for mercy!

In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Almighty and ever-living God,
You have given exceedingly great and precious promises
to those who trust in You.
Dispel from us the works of darkness
and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ,
that our faith may never be found wanting;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

G *Amen*

GRADUAL

Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes
and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

*Blessèd are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.*

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

November 22: Last Sunday in the Church Year

Ezekiel 34:11-16; Psalm 95:1-7a (v.7a); 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Matthew 25:31-46

Zephaniah 1:7-16 (ESV)

⁷ Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. ⁸ And on the day of the LORD's sacrifice— "I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. ⁹ On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud. ¹⁰ "On that day," declares the LORD, "a cry will be heard from the Fish Gate, a wail from the Second Quarter, a loud crash from the hills. ¹¹ Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar! For all the traders are no more; all who weigh out silver are cut off. ¹² At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are complacent, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill.' ¹³ Their goods shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them." ¹⁴ The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. ¹⁵ A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶ a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (ESV)

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to

have anything written to you. ² For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³ While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴ But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶ So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹ For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Matthew 25:14-30 (ESV)

¹⁴ "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants

came and settled accounts with them.
²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.'
²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'
²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.'
²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'
²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you

scattered no seed,
²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'
²⁶ But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?
²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.'
²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.'
²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.
³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Proper 28

Zephaniah 1:7–16

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

Matthew 25:14–30

God's Gift of Forgiveness Engenders Our Forgiveness of Others

The Day of the Lord is “near and hastening fast,” and it will be “a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation” (Zeph. 1:14, 15). The Lord will search out and punish “the men who are complacent” concerning His Word, “who fill their master’s house with violence and fraud” (Zeph. 1:9, 12). Then all their works and efforts will be for nothing: “Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them” (Zeph. 1:13). But those who fear, love and trust in the Lord are “good and faithful” stewards of His property (Matt. 25:21). They live by faith in His free gift of forgiveness, and they multiply His goods in the loving forgiveness of their neighbor, and “the master of those servants” settles His accounts with them by the gracious reckoning of His Gospel (Matt. 25:19). Likewise, “God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:9). Therefore, let us also “put on the breastplate of faith and love” in our dealings with one another (1 Thess. 5:8).