

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 communicants receive in, with and under the bread and wine also Christ’s body and blood. Believing communicants receive this 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 134; Antiphon: Psalm 33:8

Let all the earth fear the LORD;

let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,

who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

Lift up your hands to the holy place

and bless the LORD!

May the LORD bless you from Zion,

he who made heaven and earth!

**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.

Let all the earth fear the LORD;

let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Lord Jesus Christ,*

You reign among us by the preaching of Your cross.

Forgive Your people their offenses

that we, being governed by Your bountiful goodness,

may enter at last into Your eternal paradise;

for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever.

C *♪[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.

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*

C **hear our prayer.**

Malachi 3:13-18 (ESV)

¹³ “Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, ‘How have we spoken against you?’ ¹⁴ You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? ¹⁵ And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.’ ”

¹⁶ Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. ¹⁷ “They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. ¹⁸ Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

Colossians 1:13-20 (ESV)

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or

authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Luke 23:27-43 (ESV)

²⁷ And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. ²⁸ But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ ³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ ³¹ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

³² Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus

said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself

and us!” ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

Malachi 3:13–18
Colossians 1:13–20
Luke 23:27–43

Jesus Christ Reigns Enduring the Cross—Its Scorn and Shame

The Lord Jesus reigns in love among those who are baptized in His name. “*They shall be mine,*” He says, “*and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him*” (Mal. 3:17). Jesus’ service through crucifixion for sinful men anchors us in new life. In the proclamation of His Son, God makes His justice clear defining “*the distinction between the righteous and the wicked*” (Mal. 3:18). He truly is “*the King of the Jews*” (Luke 23:38), who governs His Church with all authority in heaven and on earth. He has come into His Kingdom by His cross, and He graciously remembers us in Paradise. Therefore, do not weep for Him, but with repentant faith “*weep for yourselves and for your children*” (Luke 23:28). Then the mountains and hills of Jerusalem, His holy Church, shall cover you with His righteousness and peace. For He “*is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation*” (Col. 1:15). “*All things were created through him and for him*” (Col. 1:16), and “*all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell*” bodily in Him, reconciling all things to Himself “*by the blood of His cross*” (Col. 1:19–20).

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

November 27: First Sunday in Advent (Series A)
Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122 (v.6); Romans 13:8-14;
Matthew 21:1-11 or Matthew 24:36-44