

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).

Last Sunday in the Church Year

November 22, 2020

INTROIT

Psalm 39:4-5a, 7-8, 12a; Antiphon: 2 Peter 3:13 NIV

In keeping with his promise

*we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,
the home of righteousness.*

*O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;
let me know how fleeting I am!*

*Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,
and my lifetime is as nothing before you.*

*And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?
My hope is in you.*

Deliver me from all my transgressions.

Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

*Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry;
hold not your peace at my tears!*

For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.

**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.**

In keeping with his promise

*we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,
the home of righteousness.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Eternal God, merciful Father,
You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead.
Enable us to wait for the day of His return
with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own
from the foundation of the world;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You 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 *let us pray to the Lord:* **C** **Lord, have mercy.**

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 (ESV)

¹¹ “For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. ¹² As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³ And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴ I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁶ I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

²⁰ “Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹ Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, ²² I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³ And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴ And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 (ESV)

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and

you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the

devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR Proper 29 (November 20–26)

Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

1 Corinthians 15:20–28

Matthew 25:31–46

By the Cross of Christ We Enter the Kingdom of Our God and Father

When the crucified and risen Lord Jesus comes to judge the living and the dead, “*He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats*” (Matt. 25:32). “*To those on His right,*” who have been crucified and raised with Him through repentance and faith in His Gospel, He will grant the blessed Kingdom of His Father (Matt. 25:34). Having been justified by His grace, they live unto righteousness in Him (Matt. 25:35–40). But “*those on His left,*” who trust in themselves and despise their neighbor, will depart “*into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels*” (Matt. 25:41). Until that day, the Lord searches for His sheep “*as a shepherd seeks out his flock*” (Ezek. 34:11–12). Through His preaching of repentance He disciplines the proud sheep and goats, “*the fat and the strong,*” but through the preaching of forgiveness He rescues the lost, binds up the injured, strengthens the weak, and feeds “*the lean sheep*” (Ezek. 34:16, 20). In this way, He destroys the power of death in the children of Adam by His Cross, so that “*in Christ shall all be made alive*” by His Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20–26).

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

November 29: First Sunday in Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7 (v.7); 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 11:1-10